

Approaches.

BY

ARTHUR LYNCH



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APPROACHES

* * * *

*And tell me of the secret of my heart,
Where every impulse sweeps with rising pain,
As forcing outlet for a higher part,
That bends my hopes, my life, to fiercer strain,
. . . Till flung within my prison walls again.*

* * * *

*Yea, must I then with patience bear my yoke?
To do what near me I have found the best?
And kill my thought, and wage a meaner stroke?
And hold my rebel longings all repressed,
That throb like living things within my breast?*

* * * *

*No, let me cling to my true life's desire,
If but it call from out the soul of me
Resistance to the depths and strength and fire,
And hope to overfling a harsh decree,
. . . And gain that world where I am whole and free.*

APPROACHES

THE POOR SCHOLAR'S QUEST OF A MECCA

A Nobel

IN THREE VOLUMES

BY

ARTHUR LYNCH

Author of "Modern Authors"



VOL. I

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VIRGIN SOIL.

CHAPTER I.

IN lands remote enough from ours and under other skies we pitch our story. For there too live kindred who call the common earth mother, and as who live their own secluded life and toil in their narrow bounds and gather here pleasure and reap now sorrow, they prattle out their little world. The world of mystery sweeps about them and more wonderful than they dream guides them; its tremulous waves bear the beatings of their pulses and in this great all of life mingle them with ours.

And in this remote land secluded in a

pretty village our story takes its origin. It is the remnant of what was once a busy little town. Its rise and fall occupied but one generation.

Let us first contemplate the scene before its quiet was broken by the din of human voices.—A range, or series of ranges of hills, mounting, terraced, irregular, is met with towards the North; at the base flows a stream or rivulet, continuing within sight miles westward. Near to our point of view, following its course there breaks out from the winding chain a spur terminating somewhat abruptly in a hill which overlooks the stream; on the opposite side, the land shelves slowly upward towards the southern slope, leaving a broad valley between; while far away to the setting sun the walls and terraced banks, diminishing and broken up, are in the remoter distance flanked by a bolder range which, running south, forms the contour of the horizon. It is a semi-amphitheatre, the broken walls crumbling for measureless ages; the arena neglected, invaded,—the ruin of a mighty colosseum of

an ancient race of gods!—No. Rather let us contemplate it, more at ease, and familiar.

Thrown before us broad, open—the scene is cheerful, friendly, enduring. The sky seems to us never so blue as here; the air is free and blithe, and has a sweet refreshment in its taste. The sun sets wonderfully behind the long range, the rampart of the hills.

* * * * *

The men who came to dwell there had little thought of landscapes in their minds. Gold had been found near the banks of the stream, below the projecting hill. The news had spread like wild-fire. This solitude—all at once, behold a scene of bustling, active life; it was a “rush,” and they swarmed there in thousands, like an army of conquest encamped, a redoubtable city of tents, but peace and goodwill was the banner of the glorious bivouac there. Freedom, hope, the yellow gold; freedom, hope, the yellow gold; freedom, hope, the yellow gold! That was anthem enough. They were giants of men! They laughed in their toil. Hurrah for the

bold pioneers, these Argonauts doughty, these men of our race, bold and sturdy enough to conquer a world.

* * * * *

Visions of wealth, what wealth can bring, were swimming in their eyes; but the gold was already the earnest, the yellow gold was the conquest, the prize. It was a possessing fever, a delightful plunder, crowned with the voluptuous transports of gain and enjoyment at last. The lucky one whose pick had struck the nugget from the earth might well feel dazzled, for there flinging back his candle's light into his eyes, the gold was blazing there.

The field had been a good one. Solid houses soon replaced the hasty tents. A town was formed, streets laid out, roads made. Public buildings were soon erected on the spot; and Duncan's Hill, as they named it, now looked down upon one of the most active little towns in all the British Empire.

* * * * *

A few years rolled on. Other gold fields and still others had been found along the

course of the little stream ; Avondale, Illabarook, Break-o'-day, Drungdrung, Ondit, Pinchgut, Nintingbool, Mannibaddar—and of all the district with its swarming population the pride of all was Tarylvale.

Wheat and potatoes year by year yield their harvest to the labours of the faithful husbandman. A village depending on such produce may be slow, but is on the whole sure. The gold once taken from the earth, the meagre soil here was little worth.

The gold yield grew less and less. The more eager spirits left. Still, there was good reward for steady work. Many had brought wives there, and many had married there. Their children had thriven in the air that blew round Tarylvale ; schools had been erected ; young life was everywhere astir, happy urchins never tired of play, bright-eyed little dames trudging decently along with the satchel in the hand. Tarylvale was their home and they clung to it fondly. The elders too had an affection for the place where they had prospered, whose progress they had seen before their eyes, whose

little politics they had helped to order, and with whose associations years had given an endearing familiarity.

Still the supply of gold became less and less. The more prudent left while it was yet time to shift well for themselves in newer fields. Others cling on till poverty begins to press, forcing them at last to seek elsewhere a sojourn.

They called their new homes, when they had thriven, by names taken from the old spot, and loved to return year by year to see old friends, until each succeeding year made the record of those they missed drearier and drearier. Tradesmen departed, houses were removed. Tarylvalde now wears a sleepy, dull, deserted look.

And here, near the bottom of the hill, at some distance from its neighbours, stands a house whose comfortable appearance shows one of goodly substance in the town. Behind, on one side is a flower garden, on the other fruit. Well-endowed and well-grown too is the garden. Behind this, again, is a long stretch of open land fenced in along

the little stream, a paddock, as they called it, on which a horse and a cow and an emu are grazing quietly together ; and bordering, within the fence along the stream, is a row of well-grown English and, alternately, Australian trees. Opposite and skirting the fence nearest the house is a thick hedge of hawthorn.

It was towards evening of a day at the end of summer that two figures, in fact those of Matthew Brandt, Manager of the Golden Club Gold Mining Coy., and his spouse, were wending their way slowly along the path which ran by this hedged fence, and continued then close by the little river. It was their favourite walk in the cool of the evening, and as they walk but slowly we may have opportunity to note down their appearance. Their characters in as far as not displayed by outward form we may learn to know a little nearer later on.

Matthew Brandt was at this time well up towards his sixtieth year. His figure was above middle-height, deep-chested, well-limbed, and erect. His step, his carriage,

showed solidity and strength. There was an unmistakable dignity, a sort of unconscious pride about his stalk, for he walked slowly and with long steps, his shoulders thrown back and his head set squarely on.

We have for a moment left his wife behind ; so had he, for he was occupied with his own thoughts and his long steps were continually bringing him a little in advance of her ; he used to stop now and then till she was even with him. Wrapped in a shawl, this made her short and comfortable figure look shorter and stouter than it was ; her features were plain but well-formed, rather large but regular ; the expression serious, one might almost have thought too much so, were it not that the deep look of the eyes was so gentle, the lines of the face so patient.

His cheeks, what was seen from the full beard, were ruddy, his head was massive, the forehead drawn into a thoughtful mould. The features had a firm set. The eye alone showed fire. It looked straight out with a dauntless look.

Matthew Brandt had come from Kentucky as a young man here. His physique might have come from Indian blood, though he was said to have descended from an old French stock. His grave demeanour might well have become a Puritan, but he professed himself a Roman Catholic.

She had looked several times into his face, and, at length, and in a peculiar gentle voice, remarked —

Austin's time is drawing very close now.

Yes.

He seems in great spirits at the thought of going to the University, though to be sure he has never been away from home before.

H'm ! What does he say ?

Oh, nothing. Only that he hopes to do well there. He says we must write every week—and so on.

And so the conversation was taken up at times, quaint enough in its reticence, indeed, where each knew what was passing in the other's mind. Austin, their eldest son, a

youngster of about sixteen, home-fed hitherto, was about to leave them to try his mettle, to shape a course. The University of Dudley was to be his "kind mother." Successful, accomplished, their pride and vanity pictured him; but there is a freshness in the confidence of boyhood, in the feelings of a home-like life, whose free impulses draw the bands closer of love. With people like these, secluded, the current of feeling powerful, unscattered, runs deep. The change from boyhood to manhood, the doing something with a life. Yes, doubtless, this sincere gravity of Matthew Brandt was well becoming. He added, after a long pause —

I have great hopes of him, if his health holds up. The fellow has a wonderful brain for mathematics.

Yes, yes, said the mother, eagerly—here were topics on which, as only mothers can, she could dilate—and for history, and the whole of those books about the old Greek philosophers he has read, and it's wonderful —

*

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*

With investiture that looms away out of the compass of our vain attempt, to infinity, it seems, familiar things are brought to us. Life, its interest, variety, is not measured by the show of formal acts alone. From the habit of thought, the depth of feeling, the zest and spirit of the individual self, our world takes form and colour. To dine, to walk, to enjoy the fresh air, these are the bountiful gifts of the earth, rated not highly. To dine, to walk with Shelley, to feel the bounding of his eager pulse, were fascination. John Keats by a few bold and happy strokes can throw a landscape before our eyes. Not mere accidents are these; nor if, truth to say, a beautiful woman casts a favour by her shadow, is beauty's self.

Culture we speak of from books, from music, sculpture, painting, and we may press the term too far. The fine sentiment is great, the living act transcends it. Whither the building up of sentiment? Where the outlet? Excellent to con, no doubt, and fitly to admire the records of the past.—Your Cromwells, Fredericks, William of Orange, your

Wallensteins, whomsoever you may please, of still more dubious repute ; but the business of the nascent hour is pressing on ourselves ; that hour is fraught with import, mystery, deeper, and greater alike than toiling sons of Earth have ever known before. Let us know our own world, be native to the times, be real ; nothing of beauty will we lose ; nay, then will gradually and at the happy moments, like the dawning of the day that lifts the darkness from the earth, come floods of wonder on our souls and worship which we struggle but all vainly to contain. The touch of life—all else bears worth but inasmuch as it in myriad developed forms impinges so.

* * * * *

Austin was sallying out for a walk, but spying his father and mother returning, returned with them a dutiful furlong.

His likeness to both was striking, but with a contrast : figure not tall, slight—miserable, the father said ; yet his step and carriage he had got from him. Of the mother's cast of feature, the lines of his face were as delicate

as a girl's. Her eye was slow, and patient; his look direct, earnest, and as though a fire smouldered beneath.

He turned and walked rapidly away. The mother's eye had rested on the countenance and looked with fond pride upon the gallant bearing of the boy. The father had measured the figure, and it had not filled his eye. Such a type had never been known on either side of the house before; he thought there must be something wrong in this effeminate child.

Meanwhile Austin had crossed the stream and had struck up into a path leading round the hill. Every step showed keener stuff within than Matthew Brandt had warranted; his spirit too was leaping in its strength. The solitary customary walk brought with it all the charm they find who know the sweets of solitude—flowing thoughts and bold imaginations. Eager, in the fresh cool air, he strode along, his pulses beating to a manful tune. Diving into the bush he struck into a track his own feet had trod a thousand times. With quicker step and head tossed back,

while the cool wind played upon the cheek, his heart was beating to imaginings of deeds and thoughts of noble work, thoughts of strife, perhaps battle—his spirit swelled to be equal to its call. To follow *truth*. The *right*. To control my life by this. I pray for this. I *pray* for this. I could die for this.

Vague, nebulous, these dreamings; things beyond him were already marking him. Our lives are driven more than that we know to lead. Yet premonitions are within the bones, and in the rising aura of the brain.

The world around about was beautiful enough; between the trees his eyes looked far away to dim receding distances, and out into the unfathomable blue. The cool fresh air, the triumph of health that raced along his blood, the immeasurable distance of extended shapes, the teeming glow of earth with its infinity of life and all resource, the blue, the deep unfathomable sky; all this was to him like the partaking of a simple sacrament. A worshipper even now he was, one who drank from a pure well inexhaustible, hopeful, still within imagination's

realm, free of the demesne, wing-sandalled. His soul dilated now with this divinity of life.

His eye strained and in the distance he beheld his own home. The smoke ascended lazily from the chimneys; embosomed in its trees the old home had a grateful comfort. Upon the bough of a tree, leaning, he looked long, and the tears rose. The life that I have lived so sweetly here is past. What have they for me, the developing years? Now wonderful seems to me life; and wonderful love. Life itself—to leap into the arena, to feel the tug of strife, the play of power. I must work. O, make my life *true*. I stretch up my hands to God! With maiden mind absorbed, with multitudinous feelings all perturbed, and hope supremely reigning, Austin strode along his homeward way.

Hallo, Austin! called out a lusty voice, and beside a windlass, enjoying their evening meal, sat Jack Clancy there and old Sam Chubb. Where are you bound for now?

Ah! said Austin, laughing, crossing over, I didn't know that you were working here. The other claim turned out a duffer, eh?

She did.

And how is this one going with you?

Why, only middling, Mr. Brandt, said Sam.

It was a peculiarity of Sam's (he was a desperate character in his cups and sometimes required half-a-dozen policemen to hold him—but this was only once or twice a year—and Washington stipulated with his gardener that he could be so often drunk,—and he toiled for the rest of the twelve-months, day by day, like a Trojan), to be in general the politest and mildest mannered man that ever broke a head on Boxing-day.

The water was gaining on us, so we are working a little late to-night to keep it down.

But sit down, Austin, me bhoy, quoth Jack, full heartily. Here take a dhrink of tay, and he poured the hospitable liquor into the lid of his billycan. Austin drank. Good, said Jack, taking a gulp. Do you remember that bottle of beer you once brought us that terrible hot day, you remember?

Austin nodded and laughed.

Bedad! said Sam—for many a year the two had toiled together and he sometimes made use of Jack's expressions in courtesy—Bedad! said he, reflectively, if my mother had given milk like that I'd have been a suckling till now. I'm getting a bit on in the years, though, Mr. Brandt, and it's a hard graft this, and not much in it now; and in Sam's mind rose up the recollection of the good old days when he could put down his £20 to back Mat Hardy against the renowned "Rough Diamond from California, gentlemen."

He sighed.

Pooh! said Austin, sipping his tea, you live here better than princes. You're your own masters, and you have here just enough exercise to keep you healthy.

Jack Clancy laughed hugely, and Sam's look of gravity broadened much.

Why, yes—and Sam held a meditative piece of pasty between his fingers—I have been in worse places than this. In Adelaide, Oh my Heaven will I ever forget that! We

were besieged by them accursed snakes too. Snakes,—serpents! I call them. He munched quietly at his pasty, and Jack balanced his billycan expectantly. He had heard the yarn a hundred times before. Yes, sir, serpents. A colony of them! One day I was pursued by them—they got to know me perhaps going by so often—and if I hadn't had one of the best horses a man ever threw his legs over under me—he was one of the Panic breed, you know them, Jack. Jack nodded with interest. Sam Chubb, sir. Sam Chubb would not be here to-day. The boss serpent was leading them.

He ate his pasty in a reflective mood, but Austin knew Sam too well to think it was all over.

Well, he inquired with great gravity, how long do you judge such a snake, I mean the serpent, the boss serpent, would be?

Sam's air told plainly that when a man has been through adventures all his life he does not insist too much. It's your tyro who asseverates.

Well, said he, next day I brought my

men together, and we killed him. A bullock dray loaded with wool was passing at the time, and we threw the beast on top of it. Well, sir, the head touched the ground on one side, and the tail, the tail, sir, the tail touched the ground on the other. Actshully.

Jack heaved a deep sigh. Ah!

It was his usual accompaniment to Sam's stories.

They ate their repast with huge appetites, like men who had earned it, that is to say; and as they drew out their pipes Jack felt that there was a call on him too. The waves off the Cape of Good Hope Austin had heard of a dozen times, and Jack's adventure with Blue Cap, the bushranger, who had "stuck him up," and whom he had quietly brought along with him to the gaol, was quite well known, and he was modest on the point.

And so you're going to Dudley, to the University, to be sure. Ah! then you'll see the Exhibition. Ah! the '51 in London, that was the sight. Well, the English manufacturers, mighty sharp fellows, too, in Birmingham — Sam nodded — thought they

would just show what they could do, and they made a needle as small, sir, as they could make one, and sent it to China. China sent it back! Here, Sam, hand me that piece of wire, there's something in my pipe.

Jack prodded away assiduously at his pipe, and Austin chuckled inwardly.

Ah, that's got it. Yes, sir, China sent it back.

He looked Austin attentively in the face, but Austin was stoical as an Indian.

Well, of course the Birmingham coves didn't know what to make of *that*, for China has the reputation, ye know, that is the real tip-topppers, ye know, not the pack—and he used very tough language—not the * * we have here, but the real Pan-jams, I'm telling ye, have the reputation of being the politest nation under—under the face of the globe. At last, turning it over and over in their minds, they screwed the top off, and inside, b' St. Patrick, there was another needle! And they screwed off the top of that, and found another needle, and that had

a screw on it, and they screwed that off. I don't like to give you the exact number—I might be wrong a point here or there—but I tell you it was one of the neatest little things that China ever did. Ah!

Actshally! said Sam.

Austin rose, and Sam and Jack rose too.

Well, how's the claim?

Oh, I don't know how this'll go, said Jack. Paddy (his second hopeful) washed the tailings there and got some good specks off the dish. It's on the old Try-again lead too that runs up the flat there. But just as we are near the bottom now the water's coming in with a bit of a rush. We've been making sets all day.

You can't dam it?

Oh, no; it's just a p'int of letting it come in, an' bailing it out.

Yes, sir, added Sam, and when we can't do that, sir, it's a case of "fresh fields and partridges" with us!

Sam, we ought to have said, had something of a turn for literature.

Och, by the way, Austin, you're going to

be an engineer. Just tell me now how high we are above that creek ?

Austin cast a rapid calculation from the distance and the fall.

Well, roughly, 80 feet at least.

Didn't I tell you ? said Jack to Sam in triumph. Sam, ye're always taking the black look at things ! If it was only the 50, as you said, we'd be below water level, and we'd have to bail that stream dry. We'll be all right, Sam, now. If we can't manage it ourselves we will have to enlarge the Company, and get bigger buckets. Eh, Sam ?

Why, yes, said Sam ; that is if our young friend is right.

Austin made a rough templet with two sticks and looked again.

Yes, Jack, was his verdict, that's a good deal more than 50.

And then Sam drew with a stick a sketch—the whole lay of the auriferous leads underground, the histories and value of the yields of which he knew like a book. Sam, in fact, was a great authority. The way he handled

the terms "Old Silurian," "disintegrating action of the water," and so on, doubtless contributed much to this. Sam's long experience, and, in his business, shrewd common-sense, gave him certainly a grip of the local geological conditions, and his manifold lore upon all mining matters made him in any company worth two or three extra men at the pick; and as he related the history of the working of the leads, and of the "piles" that were made, and the pluck of the old miners who had made the place, and the hard luck bravely encountered; and when Austin thought of Sam's rowdy days, when he used to figure in the fistic ring himself till he "married the proper woman," as he said, and brought up thirteen children; the youngster pictured it out like a romance. Sam, or perhaps it was "the proper woman," had contrived to save some money, too, and his little home had one of the nicest gardens in Tarylvale in front. Sam's appearance did not indicate sentiment, but he was a famous gardener. Jack Clancy's proper trade was that of a shoemaker, but the town had gone down,

and Jack, too, had a dozen youngsters ; so he had initiated his eldest son into the mysteries of the craft and left the shop to his care, and being strong as an ox had shouldered his pick again, and picked away for the treasures that never were to come. He “knocked out a living,” as he said, though, and as he thought of his ruddy cheeked urchins with Irish names and healthy appetites, and one of them, Mickie, the “smartest scholar in the school,” his stout heart smote cheerfully enough.

They shook hands heartily with Austin, and wished him more blessings than he could with modesty have carried ; and as he leapt lightly over a fence and disappeared from sight, and they wound away at the windlass, Jack declared with some emphasis that Austin Brandt would turn out the proper sort ; and Sam chewed his quid of tobacco with a certain “sad sincerity,” and added—That is if he doesn’t go into a decline. I know how books weighs on a man’s mind.

Austin caught up old Ben Church a little further on as that worthy individual was

wending his way homeward, axe on shoulder, and had stopped to gaze upon the sun that was setting now beyond the blue line of the distant hills. Old Ben Church was carter to the mine—bluff, broad-chested, grizzled, and rough. He was honest as the day. He had seen Austin grow up from a child, and many a time had the youngster sat looking by while Ben had felled the mighty trees. Ben was a great sportsman too, and he and Austin had often trudged the day together, or camping at night with their fishing lines out in the waters of Purrumbra Lake, had spent the evening “spinning yarns”—Ben’s from real stern hard life, that came to the youngster with all the graphic force of truth. He liked their rude clang and at the stroke of noble action felt his chest heave. Austin’s were rich with the colouring of old romance, and as his enthusiastic spirit warmed, and he looked into old Ben’s face by the fireside, Ben loved the boy with all his heart. They had slept under the same miamia, and Austin had fallen asleep with Old Ben’s stories in his ear, and had awakened in the grey dawn

laughing; and these things, he thought, bring people together as they never seem to be in busy towns.

I've been taking a last look round the old Hill, Ben, before I go to Dudley, said Austin, running up to him, and putting his arm on his shoulder.

Ay, to be sure, the wife was telling me. Where have you been lately at all? And so you're going to be an Engineer at last that you used to tell me about when you were a little boy! H'm, h'm. Always studying, always studying, Austin—still at the books. But you mustn't do too much. You're not over strong, you know.

A flush of pain passed over the youngster's face.

Well, Ben, he said, reproachfully, I've walked long enough with you without fagging, and slept in the open too, and pulled along all right.

To be sure, said Ben, it's the same with men as with horses; it ain't the pounds of muscle altogether as does it. I like to take a look at the eye to see if a horse is a

stayer. Why, you remember that old mare I had, Mettle?

Yes, of course.

Well, one day, it came this way; I was just going into the room where we was holding our Foresters' meeting, and I hears Dan Callum say, "that is if old Ben will lend me Mettle." "What's this about old Ben and Mettle?" says I. "Why," says he, "we've just been talking a bit, and I'll put down a note that Mettle'll come out from Gresham under the hour, fair trotting." Well, that's a good thirteen mile, you know, for an old horse. "I don't think it," says I. "All right," says he; "will you lend me the mare?" Well, we had a drink, and I says very well. Well, and they made the bet, and Mettle brought out Dan and Tommy Phillips from one mile post to the other in seven and fifty minutes! I couldn't ha' believed it, but Lord bless you, she had a strain of the Serang blood in her. I could tell you some funny things about horses, said old Ben, lighting his pipe. Why, there was one night Mettle got a touch of the gripes.

Well, she didn't come and knock at the door to tell me, but she let me know just as well as if she did that there was something wrong with her.

Horses have good memories, haven't they? Austin inquired. I've noticed it for places with mine.

Memories! I believe you. I was up on a station once belonging to a cousin of mine. He's done better than I have, but that's all right. Well, they brought down a lot of horses. Some of them were bred at Coonabra. Never seed each other before. Bred at different times. But they soon found each other out, and it wasn't long before all the Coonabra horses were separated from the mob, and kept together the whole day through. Do you believe horses don't speak to each other? They don't speak English, but if they haven't a lingo of their own I'm a Dutchman . . . And so you're off at last, eh? Ah, if my Alec had been a steadier boy. But it's no use talking, I suppose. He never did like the book learning, but always with the gun and the dogs or what not.

Alec Church and Austin had been to school together, and many a time Austin had ridden on his back.

Have you heard from him lately? he inquired.

No, not for this long time. He would be off to Dudley to learn the wheelwright trade, and as he stuck to it we thought it would be a very good thing for him too, and so we let him go. Well, at first he used to write regular enough, then the letters got fewer and fewer, and now God only knows what's become of him. His mother wrote to him often wanting him to come back, but he never answered a line. Alec got too fond of the card-playing, that's about the size of it, and got into company at Dudley that wasn't good for him. H'm, h'm. The wife was telling me your mother is rather poorly again.

She never is very strong in health.

God bless her for a good woman, said Ben.

CHAPTER II.

MATTHEW BRANDT sat in the comfortable dining-room, which served too for library, and read composedly. Austin's eye ran over the bookshelf whose motley collection he had read. Here were the old Greek philosophers, their biographies, and sketches of their theories, in English.

What grandly-sculptured characters those old fellows were—old Diogenes, rebuffed by Antisthenes calling out to him, "Strike me, but teach me." There was something heroic there, said Austin, gravely. "Your vanity is peeping out of the rents of your garments," said Socrates to Antisthenes. Socrates standing the whole day long at the camp of Potidæa absorbed in meditation ;

Socrates rescuing Alcibiades ; Socrates drinking the hemlock. Bias,—the words of noble dignity, “*Omnia mecum porto*” (I am my goods!). There, old Zeno, the resolute bold spirit ; Euclid’s patient labours ; Epicurus, with his sweet simplicity of life ; Thales ; Empedocles ; Pythagoras, his “music of the spheres ;” Heraclitus and the “burthen of the mystery ;” Democritus, the laughing philosopher, with his deep, earnest spirit ; Aristotle’s eager, active mind ; the serene dignity of Plato. The youngster picked up one little volume after another, dipping into casual pages. A sense of solemnity gradually came over him. He seemed as when a child with wide wondering eyes he had looked up at night to the starry sky and moved by feelings he knew not what had fallen to his knees and wept.

Then here again were later ones ; the fine souls of Locke and Descartes, and there was Berkeley with his keenness and his mysticism strangely intermixed. Hume was excluded ; and, scarcely thinking why, he had devoured even the Locke in secret, taking

it into silent corners and reading and, in his solitary walks, meditating, and then again returning. Matthew Brandt was a staunch and uncompromising Catholic, and Austin had received his charge of faith with much zeal too.

Certainly there was enough here to foster it: Lives of the Saints and Martyrs of the Church. The popes, however, were represented in no detail. Full and veracious accounts of the Reformation, from the Catholic standpoint; Christian Brothers' books; Catholic Dictionaries; Catholic pictures, prints, crucifixes, and heaven knows what else beside of pious works. Austin was devout, nay zealous, to be sure, but little versed in this portentous learning. And here, too, all mixed up together in most remarkable array, were others—Bibles, Captain Marryat's novels; the "Illustrated Literature of all Nations," containing choice stories, good and evil; Histories of America; Pope's "Iliad;" Bacon's "Essays;" "The Newgate Calendar;" "The Sentimental Journey;" "Testimony of the Rocks;"

Lyell's "Geology;" a large but ill-used Shakespeare; numerous books on chemistry and mathematics; Goldsmith's poems; Culpepper's "British Herbal;" the "Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World;" Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations;" histories of all kinds; two fine editions of Burns and Byron, illustrated, a little dogeared; and his own prim "Garden of the Soul" in miniature. Here they were, stuck promiscuously together in the shelves. He touched them with his finger as though in a sort of remembrance. Here in a corner were a globe and some chemical instruments; above, a picture of Napoleon, and opposite Pope Pius IX. clad in his robes and all the glory of infallibility. A bust of Byron side by side with one of Washington; Mary Queen of Scots descending a staircase, prettily painted; the Rev. Father Burke; an illuminated Virgin Mary; Abraham Lincoln, done in chalks; and a German picture of "The Children's Breakfast."

Austin's eye rested carefully on one after the other. They were all like old friends.

His father still read quietly. He heard his mother's voice and slipped out of the room. The door closed, and Matthew Brandt laid down his book, and there was much of sadness in his face.

He had toiled hard in his life both with hand and with brain, for he had come to Tarylvale as a gold-digger in the beginning, and in the palmy days of the place had started a newspaper that had brought him great fame at first—then, as things declined, lost for him much money; and he had been busy in a hundred ways where he thought good might be done. To provide for his home had checked the ambitions of his mind, and now there was a sort of aloofness in his character.

Austin followed his mother about as she went from place to place getting everything in order for his journey. She talked about his clothes, and told him to use an alum gargle if he found a sore throat coming on, and to change his socks if his feet got wet. Austin listened half amused, and little else was said.

And so as they drove him next day along the road that old Ben's mare, Mettle, had trotted in the hour, they spoke but little, and the silence too was grateful. The burden on his mind Austin felt not all ungenial. The words were few at parting. The husky "Be a good boy, Austin," was all the mother could trust herself to say at last. Austin bent his head. Shaking his father's hand, the latter had braced himself up to say something, looking on him earnestly :

"Remember—" The tears had gushed to Austin's eyes ; the old horse sprang forward with a sudden bound as he felt the whip lash ; it was when some distance had separated them that the good people turned to catch a last glimpse, and Austin raised his hat and bowed.

SOWING THE SEED.

CHAPTER III.

AUSTIN had arranged to stay in Dudley with his cousin Joseph Brandt. Joseph was a fine fellow, splendidly built, a good boxer, a first-rate cricketer, a great swimmer—in fact, as he with due modesty allowed a “good all-round man.” Joseph was now well up in his work, and talked familiarly of science and scientific men. He had promised in response to a letter from Mrs. Brandt to “put Austin on the right track,” and had even addressed a few lines to his charge in quite a friendly and encouraging way.

Austin was prepared to do much for Joseph

to testify to him that his excellence had found a due appreciation. Everything was full of wonder to the youngster on the long journey down. New scenes, the feeling of entering into so great a life, the vistas of learning, opportunity ; it was all a great delight.

Joseph met him at the railway station, and delighted Austin by his general good nature. The youngster's fresh bright look too and the mixture of respect and warmth with which he greeted him had pleased the doughty Joseph. Joseph described the University while his charge listened devoutly.

Joseph was then about five-and-twenty but might have passed for thirty. Magnificent physique, said Austin, mentally, and felt almost guilty when he found himself thinking the face somewhat sensual and lazy-looking, changed that quickly to good-natured and sought out some other excellence. There was a sort of firmness of resistance about the countenance, a much-to-be-respected *vis inertiae*, that gave him an appearance of weight and dignity.

Arrived at the door of Joseph's lodgings, they were received by a young lady of doubtful age whom Joseph familiarly addressed as Stobie, her name really being Letitia Stowbridge.

Austin's room was modest enough but neat. Joseph bade him unpack and then come to him to be introduced to the fellows.

You know Mac already, of course, at school, and all the others are very good fellows too—the pick of the University. This with a certain air of pride. We are doing some chemical work in my room just now.

Austin finished his business, brushed his hair, hoping to deserve at least their good opinion, and betook himself to Joseph's room. The voice of that worthy individual might have been heard a moment or two before exclaiming —

Now when the youngster's here for God's sake keep within the bounds of decency. I've a sort of charge of him.

All laughed heartily. A tap was heard at the door, and Joseph cheerily bade, Come in.

The room was for two, occupying the whole front of the house (a fair average of things at the Dudley University in those days of grace), and MacDermott was Joseph's room mate. Furniture—a couple of tables, a chest of drawers, half-carpeting, half-bare, a few knick-knacks on the mantelpiece and on the walls, several chairs, two beds, and a meagre bookcase. In one corner was a small table with several bottles and simple chemical apparatus. Joseph was lying on his bed propped up, and smoking a long churchwarden pipe and displaying much dexterity in spitting. MacDermott was seated at a table in the middle of the room copying notes, but his labour did not prevent him from joining in the conversation. Langden was seated near the fire-place. Gills and Romanoff were standing at the table by the chemicals.

MacDermott was about two-and-twenty, a short square-set figure and plain every-day face. The others were more interesting.

Gills looked about 18, fresh and naif, and from his countenance good-nature absolutely beamed. He was rather below the middle

height, and fat for so young a man. His fair thin hair, rubicund features, his soft fat hands, his twinkling eyes, and hearty laugh, all seemed natural to a very genial soul.

Langden was about six-and-twenty, tall, and of fine figure, rather slight perhaps. His hair was fair and carefully brushed and parted in the middle, his features were good, aristocratic in shape, and his whole appearance had much of that suggestion. The blue eyes were bulbous, the eye-brows light in colour, and he wore a well-trimmed fair moustache. His dress was expensive and well-fitting, and from his breast pocket peeped the tip of a white silk handkerchief. His voice was round and nicely modulated, and his whole style might have indicated foppery were it not for the complaisance of his smile.

No wonder you can never get that precipitate, said Romanoff to Gills; your solution should be as strong as possible. See, I've got a little on the watch-glass here. Hand me that glass rod, and you'll see it along the lines of friction. Gillie, Gillie, look at that rod! You can't be too careful

and clean in chemistry! In this business godliness comes second.

Gills laughed abundantly and Austin turned to view the speaker.

Romanoff was a man of over thirty years of age, tall, distingué-looking, as Langden affirmed, with chestnut hair, and a large moustache which covered a capacious mouth. The head was "dome-like," and evidently filled with brains; the features sleek, sensual; beneath the eyes the flesh was heavy and dull. Romanoff's figure though fine-looking had a want of manliness in carriage; he seemed weak in the knees.

Austin only looked for something to admire. He had dipped a little into his father's books on chemistry, but here is a man as familiar with the thing as A B C. He had found at times a sense of awe before the revelation of scientific truth, and venerated those who touched the stops of this so subtle instrument. To look deeply at these great mysteries, this was their task and privilege, that gradually with a widening vista opens out upon the problems of our life.

While Austin was dreaming Romanoff was working, and with all the style of the expert, whether in the mere handling of a blow-pipe or test-tube or in the grave enunciation of scientific laws. Keeping up a running commentary on all he did, he wasted no words.

Romanoff's hands were long and flabby, his wrist pliant. On the occasion of Gill's letting fall some boiling water on his leg it was observed that Romanoff wore long stockings like a woman, gartered over the knee.

The door opened and a young man of about five-and-twenty entered, his eyes fixed on an open note book as he walked slowly forward. He was tall, well made, of good features, and of quiet gentlemanly appearance.

I say, Romanoff, old fellow, he spoke, looking up, there's something I can't make out in this physiology at all. Would you mind coming into my room when you've done?

Right, my dear Kithdale, answered

Romanoff. I've just about finished. Gillie, you must go over these tests yourself to-morrow, and get some chloride of platinum next time, will you? Get it at Blackett's, and I'll show you a good precipitate with the potassium. Work very carefully, and when you are taking notes write down precisely what you observe, not what the book says it ought to be.

Thanks very much indeed, said the rubicund youth, and Romanoff, putting on his coat and saying with a general all round smile, We'll make Gillie a credit yet, left the room.

Well, Gillie, you have taken it all in, I hope, said Joseph twisting his moustache.

Gillie laughed—he always seemed ready for that—and there was something interesting between his overflowing good nature and a sort of sincerity in his boyish well-be-seeming manners.

Yes, it was very good indeed of old Romanoff to take so much trouble, and I'll do the tests myself to-morrow, directly after breakfast, if you don't mind, Joseph.

Good, Gillie, said Joseph, yawning. Ach ! Bring my slippers, Gillie, old boy. They're under the table there.

Everyone was comfortable. Langden himself took out an elegant cigarette case and smoked a Flor de Cuba delicately. MacDermott stopped in his writing. The conversation ranged over all sorts of subjects—the University, the Town, the Theatres, Sports, anything.

Did you tell Langden that about the Prof. ? said Gills, laughing.

No, by Jove ! cried Joseph, starting up and resting on his elbow, that wasn't bad. Schuler and I were working at our body together and Tom MacGuire was behind, and we were chatting away at the time, when Tom, as I thought, came up and stood looking at the subject. Well it was the Prof., but I didn't know. I was working away and he didn't speak, so I dug him in the ribs. " You're a sly old dog, Tommy," says I, " Bella at the Rosemary told me a little tale ! "

Gills laughed uproariously.

And his name is Tom ! he cried, rubbing

his eyes, and he goes to the Rosemary for his liquor !

These facts were well known to all the company to whom he addressed himself but Austin, but Gillie seemed to take a personal interest in the narrative.

Hullo, hullo, Brandt, what's this, he cried, didn't he? and Gillie got more rubicund than ever.

A loud knocking was heard at the door.

Come in, roared Joseph, and the door opened. Ho, Schulter, old boy, and Jimmie too, take a seat, take a seat, make yourselves at home. Take care there's no sulphuric acid on that chair, Schulter. Gillie has been doing chemistry, and you might be as badly off as old Prof. Halifax was once.

What's that, what's that? cried Gillie, eagerly. I haven't heard that one, and he laughed in expectation.

Oh, nothing. But the old Prof., you know, was once manager of a large sulphuric acid factory, and with his usual gallantry was showing a party of ladies one day over the works, and they sat down on a long

form. Well, the Prof. didn't notice that his end had a thin smearing of sulphuric acid until he rose again.

Joseph grinned as he puffed at his pipe, and Gillie was convulsed.

Well, the old Prof. told me himself that for the rest of the interview he had to show all the politeness of a Persian Chamberlain.

Other stories followed. Mr. Summerville with great humour related an absurd thing about an absent-minded man; but Joseph shook his head, saying—

Jimmy! Jimmy!

Joseph caught Mr. Schultless's eye and gave a wink on Austin. Schulter's tale had given, if one might judge of Gillie's explosives, promise of being very laughable, but it ended suddenly in certainly an apparent want of point.

But damn it all, whar's the old hoss, Romanoff? We called at Derwent House, and Mrs. Temple told us you were gone out, so we thought we'd try here first at this hour of the day, said Summerville to Langden.

Romanoff and Kithdale now appeared, the

latter much cheered in appearance. He greeted the new arrivals heartily but in gentlemanly style.

Will you stay to dinner? Joseph inquired of Romanoff.

No, said Mr. Summerville, they're booked for me to-night. That's what I came here for. We're going to "Tambour Major" after dinner. I got some dress circle passes for to-night.

From Nelly herself, added Schultless, and Summerville bowed modestly.

Mr. James Summerville might have been two-and-twenty, but in some respects looked as boyish as Gills. He was short, but neatly made, with a round, merry-looking face, full of "quips and cranks." His eye, and the turned-up mouth, and the fair hair parted in the middle, all gave a suggestion of curls. He further had a remarkable accomplishment of making a sound like drawing corks during lulls in the conversation.

No one knows his way better about than Jimmy, Joseph expressed it when they were gone.

No, you can't pack him, said Gillie most appreciatively ; and he's the best goal sneak the University ever had. Better than Dedman was, people say.

That's the way always ! The new men soon forget the old vets. I wish Langden was here.

Well, then, but did you see the game Jimmy played last Saturday ? Big Tankard had the ball, and was making off for a run along the wing and bore down on little Jimmy as if he would run over him. Well, he bounced the ball, Jimmy took it quickly on the hop and put it through like winking, and looks up perkily at Tankard and gives a cockey strut, as much as to say, "How's that for high ?"

Yes, added Mac, and from the angle too there was just about room for it to go through the posts without touching.

The conversation continued. The amount of lore all three had of sport was remarkable ; Gillie the most enthusiastic, Joseph the most learned, Mac the most judicial ; and the matter seemed important.

Where everything was so good-natured

one was not disposed to be critical. They were waxing hot, however, over a football match that had, it appeared, occurred between two rival clubs; the dispute had turned upon the occupation of one of the players, Bashford. Joseph asserted that he was a paid professional, but Gillie was bringing most detailed evidence to show that he depended solely on his business as a shoemaker, and quoted with great familiarity the names of many heroes — Tommy Collins, Paddy Greene, Coulson, and others who may now appear to have been of the “illustrious obscure,” but who were very famous in that day.

The bell rang for dinner. Austin was now introduced to the lady of the house who called him Master Brandt, whereat Gillie smiled. She was a little quiet motherly looking body, something wearied about the plain dull features, but withal, as was soon evident, with plenty of good humour. Further there were two others who had not the appearance of students, but seemed on good terms with the rest.

One of them, Mr. Gulpin, was a very tall man, and the other a short man, Mr. Crossley, had that sort of knowing look that people get about them who have had much to do with horses. These gentlemen, however, were both bank officials. Miss Letitia Stowbridge appeared carrying a tray, followed by a young lady who was greeted very heartily all round as she entered smiling and took her place by Mrs. Stowbridge at the table.

Well, and how are we? inquired Joseph with a smirk.

Miss Lyddiard looks blooming to-night, said the short man, Mr. Crossley, with the red whiskers.

She is always blooming! attempted Gills, and blushed and laughed as he spoke.

The conversation passed rapidly from one topic to another. They were all on the best of terms with one another. Life and good spirits reigned—how excellent to relax awhile that coldness and severity of study that sometimes leads to pedantry! Miss Lyddiard, or Lyddie, as Joseph called her confidentially, did not speak much, but

was the object of considerable attention. She was small of figure, of rather plain but on the whole very agreeable countenance. After dinner, over which Joseph seemed to exercise a sort of presidency, Gillie asked him to make up a game of Euchre. Austin and MacDermott went out for a stroll.

Well, it seems like yesterday, Mac, since we sat at school together.

Yes, Austin, old fellow, replied the other taking his arm, and here we are down here together. I was glad to see you, no mistake, and in for Engineering too! You will like Prof. Campin; he is a splendid fellow.

Ah!

And the work too; this year's for me, especially. I have sometimes felt quite enraptured with it. It gets wonderfully interesting.

Austin liked this enthusiasm. He felt his spirits so high that he would like to do kind things or say kind things to all sorts of people, and he and Mac walked along with the feelings of old friends met. They discussed old days *ad libitum*, and the new

faces he had seen were very interesting too.

Look here, we could talk away till morning, but tell me about these fellows. Romanoff was a splendid fellow. What a strange name, though, he didn't seem a foreigner.

Mac laughed.

There are lots of things, Austin, that you will have to learn at first till you drop into the way. It doesn't do to look too much of a Freshman, you know, so I'll put you up to one or two wrinkles. The University is "The Shop," you know.

Ah!

And Fanny is familiar for Prof. Fann-court; and Nat. Phil. means Natural Philosophy. . . . And don't go into any sweeps of Bob, the porter. He got up a subscription to bury a kid of his that was going to die.

Well?

Well, but it didn't die; "not this time," he said, but he kept the money all the same, and no doubt the child will soon be in a

dangerous condition again. . . . And do you know what a Juggins is?

A Juggins?

Ah, Austin, you'll have much to learn. Where are "honest women who earn their bread by the prick of the needle" to be found?

In Shakespeare's "Henry IV.?"

Mac laughed immensely, and Austin looked puzzled.

But tell me about Romanoff.

Mac laughed again. You said "Mr. Romanoff" to him, didn't you? . . . And didn't you notice Gillie laugh?

Yes, but he was laughing half the time, . . . and I couldn't see the point of all his jokes. . . .

Mac too laughed. Ah, you'll learn these things by-and-bye, you'll learn, you know. Yes, one learns. But touching Romanoff in particular that happens to be a nickname given him by Bruno, of all men in the world, on account of his style, and it hits off Simpson to a T. Oh, Bruno is the same as Kithdale too, Thomas Kithdale Brown in fact.

Austin hoped he had not offended by his liberty, but was told that amongst friends—and he was admitted into the charmed circle by natural right—Mr. Simpson rather liked it.

He had a grand head, said Austin, and how good of him to take all that trouble with Gillie and Kithdale.

Simpson's no fool, there's no doubt of that. He was a student at Cambridge, and afterwards for a time in Paris. He has travelled the continent, and they say he used to floor the Prof. in classics by quoting Plautus and Petronius Arbiter and Seneca off-hand at great length. Joseph, you know, has a sort of charge over Gillie, promised his governor to keep an eye on him. Gillie will do anything for Joseph, and Romanoff or Langden either. That yarn of Joseph's about the Professor he has heard Joe tell a dozen times and laughs like mad every time it is repeated. Langden had a good thing some time ago, and he used to take Gillie around with him to one place after another, and at every place he told it he said Gillie

laughed more than all the others put together. Gillie is a rare old Juggins, but not half a bad sort.

He was very attentive to the chemistry, though, said Austin, as a set off against his apparent levity.

Oh, yes, Romanoff won't stand any nonsense either while he's working. Joseph had promised to give Gillie a drilling, but he had forgotten most of the tests and was too lazy to look them up, so he asked Romanoff to run through it. Romanoff is a first-rate hand, a good glass-blower too; you ought to see some of his work. For a long time he was in a chemist's shop. Heaven only knows where he hasn't been. He is about as fly as any joker that ever came to Dudley.

And is he *au fait* at the physiology too?

Yes, he's got a good head on him. Kithdale was copying out some notes for him. He said he was glad to do it for Romanoff explained the difficulties. He laughs at poor old Bruno, and declares that once there were two pages gummed together and Bruno went straight on over to the third side. Then there

was another he relates about Bruno wanting to dose a man with some medicine, and the mixture inside the man's stomach would give a chemical reaction and make a mass of plaster of Paris out of it. Paving him with good intentions, Romanoff called it. He won't let anyone else laugh at Kithdale though. Old Bruno works like a brick and is steady as a rock.

And Summerville? He seemed lively enough.

I believe you, this is the flower of the shop here. What Jimmy doesn't know about town would take a little trouble to learn. His exploits would fill a book. They have in Dr. Williamson's lectures a little effigy of an India-rubber baby, Bambini by name. Well, old Williamson is a bit short-sighted, you know. So before the lecture Jimmy had tied a string to it and passed it over the rafters, and whenever Williamson went to clutch the wretched object Jimmy gave the string a tug. It was immense. But you don't drink your beer, old man.

No, I'm not used to very much of it.

Pooh, you'll learn. Dr. Black assured us one day, in our room, that it was a man's duty to make his head early. You ought to hear Jimmy Murray on the man who sips his beer like a Frenchman. He swears it mars his flow of soul.

Who? Jimmy Murray?

Oh, didn't Joseph tell you. He belongs to our noble company and occupies the room next to you. Jimmy is the most famous character at The Shop. A splendid fellow. He was away at the boat race. There's a great boat race to-day, you know, between the public schools. Half the University will be there. Jimmy wouldn't miss it for worlds.

Mac, who had been at school the most sober-sided of them all, had now a man-about-town style, and when he told Austin of the little matters it would be necessary for him to learn he pulled his moustache and smiled on him in almost an irritating way.

And by-the-bye, who is Miss Lyddiard?

I was surprised to see a young lady at the table.

Oh, she's a great favourite at Richmond House. A good girl too. Lyddie knows when a joke's gone far enough.

But is she alone in the world, or how does she come to be there?

Well, she was a great friend of Stowie's at first. They knew each other at school. Stowie used always to be cracking her up to us. Then she got a place as saleswoman at a great drapery shop; so Stowie asked her to come and live with them. Well, Miss Lyddiard had all the best of it, and now there'll be "razars a-flying in de air" one of these days. Stowie informed me that her hair was once black. This was a great secret, she declared, and she would only tell it to me, but as she told it to all the others on precisely the same terms, to repeat it, I hope, is not exactly perfidy.

Mac appeared much amused. They had now reached home. The cards were in full swing. Miss Lyddiard was watching the game with great interest; Miss Letitia

Stowbridge was practising on the piano ; Gillie and Joseph were partners, and while the latter was pulling out his moustache at great lengths in a contemplative sort of way, Gillie was eager with excitement.

D—n it, he said, I didn't think they'd have euchred us then.

H'm, that's easily done, said the astute Joseph. You ought to have led off with your bower, of course. Ah, Austin. Did you show him around, Mac ? But you'll be tired with your trip ; you ought to go to bed now.

Austin was not tired, but he went to his room, unpacked his boxes, and took out his valuables, the portraits of his mother and father, Jessie, his eldest sister, Susan and Harold, two younger than himself ; and now that no one was there to observe him, he looked at them all attentively with the tears in his eyes, and kissed the women folk gravely.

Then some pictures his mother had given him he took out, and a little bust of Napoleon, and a portrait of John Locke, that he had bought for himself. These treasures

arranged, he slowly undressed. The little events of the day, trifling as they were, had filled his mind. The new faces were all different to anything he had seen before. His last thoughts were for his people, and falling on bended knees in his night-dress before his bed Austin pictured to himself the dear old home. Every stock and stone about the garden came familiar, the old pump behind the dairy, the trellis for the vines, the old corner in the dining-room where, the years through, he had read his books. Then he thought of his walks, and the sweet fresh air. He drew his breath deeply, and then his mind returned, and each familiar touch made dear ones dearer. He was womanish after all for like a foolish woman he wept; then lay down and soon was wrapped in sleep.

* * * * *

Oh—o—o—oh—oh! Groans seemed to be jumping out of somebody in the next room. Oh, O, O, O, O!

The groans continued and were now mingled with the refrain of a song.

Cheerily, my lads, yo ! ho !—oh ! o—oh ! yo—oo ! ho !

Going in, Austin found Joseph and Mac already in the room ; Gillie was the groaner, lying there in bed ; and, smoking a long churchwarden pipe and flourishing a bottle of soda water, and sitting on the aforesaid Gillie, and bumping him at intervals, was a figure he conjectured to be Murray.

Hullo, what's all this, Jimmy ? asked Joseph, laughing at Gillie's aspect.

This, cried Murray, heartily, this is a bottle of soda water, and, he added confidentially, not a bad thing either.

Oh, take him off, Joseph, take him off ; he's sitting on my ribs.

Poor old Gillie, and Joseph laughed again. Yes, come off, Jimmy, go to bed. By Jove, half-past three o'clock. Come off, Jimmy, come off. You ought to have swallowed that good thing on the way.

Murray laughed in good humour. Well, come to my room, my dear fellow, and let's discuss the British Constitution. You see I can say that all right. Here, draw a chalk line there—yo, ho—quick march, and he departed.

Gillie, who even between his groans had tried to laugh, now chuckled away immensely at Murray's humour.

Joseph stayed with the humourist a few minutes, and saying, Well, we'll talk about it in the morning. Get to bed now,—shut the door, and all again was peace.

CHAPTER IV.

THE arrangement of the streets in this quarter of the city was something particular and admirable. Parallel to Bolivar Street was Southey Street, a business street, served with a line of cable trams direct to the city, a street of busy trade—drapers' shops, boot shops, tobacco shops—or, rather, cigar divans, saloons of tonsorial artists, hardware emporiums, universal supply companies' bureaus, soft goods palaces, and of the invariable concomitants of civilization, those popular temples of the cultus, "licensed to sell fermented and spirituous liquors"—bustle, noise, cabs, cars, trams, the street thronged, business men in a hurry, women bent on purchase, the tradespeople, working-men, errand boys, sluttish girls, and loafers.

Within a stone's throw of this was Bolivar Street—a little boulevard of two and three-storey residences, each with its balcony, its portico, its little plot of garden in front—no bustle, no noise, not a shop, never an emporium, any popular temple “licensed”?—no, not a vestige, not even a tonsorial artist's saloon, a cigar divan, or an oyster grotto. That quiet half-mile of length was a perfect little Arcadia of respectability—select boarding-houses principally, and residences of wealthy Jew pawnbrokers, money-lenders, and bookmakers. At one extremity Bolivar Street approached the beautiful gardens of the University, at the other end it descended towards the city, the dust, and the shops.

Austin and MacDermott arrived at the University at last. The Freshman was in great spirits, and eager to behold his new *camarades*.

The students were mostly standing in little groups about the quadrangle. Their manner was easy, somewhat lounging. All wore black stuff gowns, or relics of such.

See how ragged that student's gown is,

he said. All tied together with little knots.

Mac laughed.

Don't say so aloud, Austin. Now try and look like a second year man. Wait till you see Tozer's gown or Summerville's. Jimmy slings his over his shoulders with a piece of hay rope.

Austin looked after one who went by with his gown torn off halfway down his back, and hanging in a tattered fringe behind.

Well, yes, said Mac, there is a sort of—what shall I say?—a graceful *négligé* about that.

Mac showed the various rooms.

Here is the library. Austin peeped in. A handsome room, well-stocked with books; and there were sitting, each at a small table, a number of students, who looked certainly assiduous enough.

Look, whispered Mac, there's Goodwood, the classical man.

Austin looked at Goodwood attentively—a big-boned, dull, stockish-looking man. He was at that present moment counting

through the pages of a big volume how often Cicero used *se* after *velle*, thereby and by like deeds to place his name upon the scroll of fame.

And that, said Mac, pointing to a thin, pale, coldfish little fellow, that is the crack mathematician of "The Shop."

Austin bowed with great respect, and they left the room.

The appearance of the University itself was much to be liked, its sober blue sandstone, its mantling ivy on the walls. Yes, it had an air of simple cheerful dignity. Old Milton would have been content. Behind the main building was a large Natural History Museum. They wandered round. Everything new, everything interesting. Mac laughed at the enthusiasm of the Freshman.

Here, on the west side, was the skeleton of an enormous ostrich. A student, the celebrated Bob Mitchell, celebrated as the "crack boxer of the University," explained Mac—he was beginning to dilate on this—was showing an old gentleman, evidently from the country, the sights.

Would you think, said he, that that ostrich was the lineal descendant of the dove that was let loose by Noah at the time of the flood?

The elderly gentleman looked up.

Eh? What! what?

Darwinian theory, you know, returned Mr. Mitchell, gravely, Darwinian theory. . . . Well, he continued, in an elucidative sort of way, and with a delightful wave of the hands, the fact that he was caught *after* that event might seem to give some colour to the view!

The crack boxer—he once had a bout with Pug Britten, Mac declared, “and there were no cock’s eyes out”—and the elderly gentleman continued their walk.

Austin surmised from the context that the graceful metaphor of the “cock’s eyes” implied that no decisive advantage had been gained on either side, and followed Mac meditatively into the lecture-room where a lecture was about to begin.

Most of the students were talking together with great volubility. Their physiognomies were interesting. Those in the front rows

looked somewhat earnest and intent on work, others behind were boisterous.

Austin with a vague association of his school days whispered slyly in Mac's ear —

Are these Freshmen too?

Oh, no, replied Mac with dignity. This is a lecture for second year men, but I thought you would like to hear the Prof.

Presently the professor appeared—a short, stout, dapper, little man, who began to talk on erudite subjects with a most remarkable wealth of learning. He was not too dignified, either, to despise a joke that fell in his way—a genial trait. The students laughed uproariously. The lecture over, the Freshman was full of talk.

Yes, said Mac, no doubt he's very learned. A big gun, but slow—one of the old school, who refused to accept Darwinism. He had written ten huge volumes on palæontology, and also elaborated a system of classification of his own, and every year he tells the fellows that if Darwin were right!—then *that* would be wrong! Poor old Darwin! how he does laugh at him! And

he tells the same old jokes year after year. I have a note-book where they are all marked down in their places. On Monday morning he will be pulverizing Lamarck, and then he will suddenly drop in a broadside into Darwin, and then, at about half-past eleven, he will be showing that Darwin is a little antagonistic to Lamarck, and his face will begin to broadly beam, and he will then declare, as though suggested on the spot:—

‘Strange all this difference should be

‘Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee! eeh, eeh, hee!’

Ah, Hudibras, that’s not bad. But he was really humorous, his eyes twinkled so much.

Yes, laughed Mac, and so were the fellows. I think they are more humorous than he is. On one occasion, at a place marked “Goak,” *à la* Artemus Ward, poor old Fanny had got off the track, and related reminiscently the fate of another anti-Darwinist who was “taken off” by a railway train while absorbedly fishing for the *Lingula Davisi* in a palæozoic cutting. The fellows laughed, and Fanny with a most bewildered

countenance kept peering up and waving his hands and calling out, "That's no joke! That's no joke!" He brought down the house that day.—Poor old stage coacher, "After life's fitful fever he sleeps well;" and his whole history, his "system of classification," and the record of the ten big palæontologic tomes, might be summed up in this epitaph: "He did not believe in Darwin."

Mac described all the others in turn, and in rather a captious tone, always excepting Prof. Campin; and Austin walked by his side, somewhat sad for the martyr of the *Lingula Davisi*, and for the "System of classification," and for the ten big palæontologic tomes, and sad for all the life histories sunk in that ominous headline: He did not believe in Darwin.

CHAPTER V.

THE hero of last night's adventure was at lunch. A man of about thirty, it seemed, short, broad-shouldered, but with small legs, bandy, and wearing, perversely, very tight breeches. His face had the most genial look, with his limpid blue eyes, the light chestnut hair, with the little "cow's" lick in front; and there was in his manner a sort of cheery confidence, a friendliness that won on all. At lunch amongst other subjects, such as the full particulars and detailed account of the boat race, the record of certain steeple-chase horses, and several critical points in whist, in all of which Mr. Murray appeared to be *facile princeps*—it is true that in claiming authority for himself in whist he made concessions to Joseph in regard to euchre—

and after a slight diversion on the coal strike, wherein Mr. Murray in settling the question *ex cathedra*, had declared that he ought to be able to speak upon coal, considering that his mother was the daughter of an ironmaster (Mac's muttered objections about "knowing something of the geological structure of the strata" were put aside simply by the palm of the hand)—the conversation turned on the Australian poet, Gordon.

It was very interesting that Murray could relate personal anecdotes about the poet—How that he was a tall bearded man, with a peculiar look, and how he sat his horse with his long legs stretched out like a pair of tongs, said Murray, and how they had often clinked glasses. If so familiar with the works of an obscure poet, what must be his learning in the great ones!

Therefore all seemed happy when a proposal came from Murray himself to read "King Lear" to them after lunch.

They adjourned to Joseph's room. Joseph reclined on his own bed, Murray on Mac's. A jug of beer was brought in by Letitia to

Joseph's order, and placed near Murray. He called her a "graceful Hebe," quaffed a glass, and began the reading. To read well is a rare accomplishment, but Murray had undoubtedly acquired it. His voice was very good; a slight remnant of the Scotch accent took the chill of the English away, as Romanoff said; he read like a man of practice, who knew his own powers and their limits, and avoided strain, and kept within the modesty of nature.

"*Rats and mice and such small deer.*" That's a peculiar expression, said Murray, interrupting his course. Gillie, old boy, get my note book, you'll find it in my great coat pocket in my room.

Gillie returned instanter bringing the book and holding the ink for Murray to inscribe.

He notes down any passage that strikes him, intimated Mac to Austin.

The reading continued. To be sure it was thirsty work, and none of the others, not even Joseph, though Murray pressed him hard, cared much for "The British Beer."

In the evening they had some singing. Gillie, Miss Stowbridge and Crossley all tried, but here too Murray was the lion. He had a baritone voice of first-rate quality, at least after hearing Crossley. He could sing anything—Nancy Lee, The Gallants of England, Death of Nelson, The Marseillaise, Die Wacht am Rhein, Lead, Kindly Light, Juvivalera, Just touch the Harp gently, my bonnie Louise, Little Footsteps, MacSorley's most illigant Twins, Kitty Wells—anything. Murray had rare humour, but pathos was his forte. He sang, The Golden Shore, and the "I Remember, I Remember," filled the whole room with a dreamy atmosphere of longing. Oh, what worlds within worlds float about us! How great, how full of life, full of those feelings, inexpressible, those thoughts so keen that are life's kernel, can be to a faithful mind the daily round that some call dull and tasteless! This little piece of sentimentality to be sure the novice did not express, but sat secluded. His thanks to the singer were given, however, with a look of admiration, and Murray smiled.

Come, now then, Austin, you have the call, and I'll sing whatever you like.

But I know so few. Let me see. Ah ! "Way Down the Swanny River." Will you please sing that ; it will be something to have heard.

Murray sang it, and sang it well. Austin looked round the room and the faces seemed softened and subdued. Gillie, with his rubicund smooth face, his pale hair, and blue eyes seemed as native to this mood as to his laughing. The song was finished and Murray bowed himself out of the room. His cheerful glance fell on all alike, and all were charmed.

It was explained that his mother lived some little distance out of town, and that he had taken his present lodgings only to be near the University. But he went home every Saturday night.

How gentlemanly he is ! said Miss Lydiard.

What a grand voice ! said Gillie.

Oh, he waltzes divinely ! and Miss Stowbridge closed her eyes and threw her head

back and made a *glissade* almost into the arms of Crossley.

Hold on, Jimmy, old man ; I'll go part of the way with you, Joseph called out to him, and his laziness seemed to have vanished.

The others were left to their own cheerful company, and softened, perhaps, by the music, talked comfortably on all sorts of subjects, and related all sorts of little incidents and adventures, and finally, everyone happy, retired to bed.

CHAPTER VI.

THE next day was Sunday. Breakfast at ten o'clock, and Austin sat in his room meditating—for he was hungry—on purely secular affairs.

He picked up the “Garden of the Soul,” and therein saw inscribed —

TO AUSTIN FROM HIS FATHER.

Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest,
Lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

It was a costly book and Austin put it carefully aside.

He opened the New Testament. To Austin—with love, was written in his mother's handwriting. He was still reading when the bell rang for breakfast :

What went ye out into the wilderness to see ?

A reed shaken by the wind ?

But what went ye out for to see !

After breakfast, Gillie and Miss Lyddiard and Kithdale Brown prepared to go to church together. Joseph called Austin to his room, and expounded, even with unction, the duty and particularly the respectability concerned in religious observances. He had a sick headache himself, but Crossley and Gulpin were both good members of the Church that was founded on a rock. And Joseph proceeded to fill his pipe.

Austin looked up with a serious face, and tried to persuade Joseph to allow him to omit for a time at least these duties.

But, Austin, what will your father say? He wrote to me expressly and asked me as a favour to see that you went to your mass! So get ready. What! But I say you must! and there's an end of it!

Austin's lips trembled and his eyes filled, and the look he gave Joseph seemed to have more of wonder than of rage or rebellion.

He strode out, and Joseph burnt his

fingers with his match, staring at the door.

The mustard seed, does it dream of the sturdy trunk and leafy boughs ?

We suppose not. Nor does the sucking dove know why he trims his bill.

Nor the lion cub consider of these things when he leaps at the smell of the fresh warm blood.

The winds of heaven have work to do, and the blue sky, and the waters of earth.

Beneath our ken lies life. Now and then only we bubble into consciousness.

And so Austin used to wonder at his own strange disbeliefs and mutinies, and the uncertainty and the obduracy that had taken possession of his soul, and yet that he had no weapons to fight against.

Miss Stowbridge was all in a flutter, and came in somewhat timidly to dust the ornaments on the mantelpiece, and said that it was a beautiful day outside, and how she wished she could get away to church, but she had so much to do always that she had never a minute to herself, but that all the rest had gone, Miss Lyddiard, Mr. Brown, and all, whereat he smiled, and Miss Stow-

bridge enlarged in praises of Mr. Gills, who was really a good boy.

He has always been brought up at home amongst his sisters, she proceeded to tell him. One of them was down here shortly, such a good-hearted sensible-minded girl, she looked ; and they were so fond of each other. It was quite a treat to see them together. Mr. Murray is always away on Sundays. The house seems dull without him. He sings beautifully, don't you think so ?

Yes.

And is so gentlemanly and so clever too, though he has not got through any of his examinations yet.

Ah !

It appeared that J. R. M., as he always called himself, had prepared a rather pretentious time-table, every hour from five in the morning to half-past nine at night mapped off in studies—" Saturday afternoon free ! "

Miss Stowbridge laughed very much. " Oh, dear old J. R. M. "

And he doesn't keep it quite religiously ?

Keep it ? Why he never gets up till twelve o'clock, and that keeps the girl longer at her work, and sometimes keeps the lunch back, and then they grumble, and blame me. It's very nasty.

It was explained that J. R. M.'s respected mama lived not more than a couple of miles away in a delightful little arbour of a place near the Fitzroy Gardens, but that the worthy J. R. M. found it necessary always to be near the University, so as not to waste time going to the lectures, and so as to be able to have access to the laboratories and books of reference, etc., etc., without delay, when working at his own experiments. His mama it appeared had not only unlimited affection for him but also unlimited confidence.

Poor old lady, and she is so anxious that he should pass his examinations. She came here the other day, but he was not in ; Mr. Gills told her that he was at a lecture, but that was a fib. And she asked if he worked

hard, and if he was really very, very steady. Poor old lady, the tears were in her eyes; she looked at me so straightforward, and so trustful she seemed, that I didn't know what to answer. Mr. Brown said he had a great mind to tell her the whole truth, but Mr. Gills looked as serious as a judge and assured her that he was. Yes, poor old thing. And when she left Mr. Gills offered her his arm downstairs. She doesn't like to be thought so old, and she is very proud and touchy too, but she seems to have taken quite a fancy to Mr. Gills, and leant on his arm, and as he bowed her into her cab she smiled and invited him to come out next day with her boy. J. R. M. was delighted with Gillie, as they call him, and said he was one of nature's noblemen.—Ah! but I must go and get the dinner ready. And she smiled and skipped off and left Austin to his own half-amused reflections.

After dinner, Romanoff, Langden, and two others—Adams and Wilson—came round. Adams was a short, stout, and rather fleshy

young man with a very thick voice and phlegmatic air; Wilson, a stumpy, flat-faced, turned-up-nosed young man of fresh complexion. He smoked assiduously, and delivered opinions with a certain air of satisfaction, if with himself, still also to be charitable with the present company and "our set" in general. These two were by no means freshmen but probably well advanced in their course.

Adams too, it appeared, had recently been fined for some transgression of the rules—a little episode of bringing an enormous number of cray-fish into the lecture-room. Desks, walls, tables, charts, blackboards, windows, jars, boxes, instruments, seats, stairs, and floors had been all alive with cray-fish. Wilson's little joke about its being "their day out" had been well received, but when some of them began to crawl up the professor's legs, Adams had brought down the house by loudly whispering, "He's got 'em on." They all laughed now again. Gillie particularly saw the

humour of the thing; Adams himself, as perhaps it was becoming, remained comparatively stolid.

Well, he said half-deprecatingly, you see I'd been quiet for a long time; but, he added, the fellows came up like trumps over that subscription. I have Murray to thank for that.

The exchequer was low with him too, said Langden, I don't know how he did it.

Adams smiled a peculiar smile and looked to Wilson, who explained.

Well, between ourselves, you know, Jimmy really didn't have the funds, and Bob himself paid his whack.

Jimmy is one of the right sort, said the thick-voiced Adams, "one of the old school."

I tell you what it is, said Wilson, there are very few fellows ever brought better brains up to that shop than J. R. M. Pity he's such a lazy beggar,—but it's always the way; the good fellows are the worst off. Damn'd little prigs like Leake get on, and Jimmy Murray, the wittiest fellow we have ever had, and a man who would give his last

ha'penny to rap on a frying-pan to a friend, is out of it !

Much sympathy at large was expressed on this account, and Mr. Gills warmed by his enthusiasm ventured the independent opinion that " the Shop wouldn't be what it is without him."

This was in a great measure a successful effort, but Wilson perhaps on purely general grounds of prestige and the respect due to the fourth-year men broke in—Oh yes, one of the old school.

He held his pipe between his fingers and gazed meditatively at an ascending ring of smoke. He had a reputation for being able to make these rings. The fellows coming on, Gillie, are not all of the same stamp !

The others also shook their heads gravely.

That was a real good thing Jimmy said at Judge Wentworth's dinner table, put in Gillie.

What was that ? Kithdale Brown inquired, I haven't heard it.

Gills was delighted.

Oh, he was talking to Mrs. Wentworth

herself and put hot potatoes in his mouth, and then he spluttered it out without thinking, you know, and instead of getting red in the face, and that, he put on a smile, and asked her, "Do you know what Dr. Johnson said on a similar occasion?" I think it was Dr. Johnson, I've forgotten exactly how it goes, but it was something that way, wasn't it, Wilson?

Well!

Oh, well, he said a fool would have swallowed that.

It was evident that Gillie was still a freshman. He got "red in the face and that," as he found himself telling a story in this distinguished company, and evidently didn't know how best to make his points. The others "told their yarns" like artistes, their manner and expression being something beyond reproduction.

Gills was received with a patronizing smile, and he was partly happy.

Ah! but, said Wilson, in a reminiscent mood as he watched another ring, the best thing Jimmy ever said was when Professor

Wilde was telling his history-class that the price of a man in ancient times was £140.

This was evidently well-known.

But what did old Prof. say? asked Gills.

He told him to ask Browning, said Wilson, grinning and sending up another ring.

The greatest rake of his day! added the thick-voiced Adams, with gravity.

But here, let's have a game of euchre, and Wilson began shuffling a pack.

They were soon in full swing. The room was full of smoke (Gills was not a smoker), they blew the froth off the cool pewter, and talked. They were all (except Gills), Romanoff had once expressed it, "men of strong gizzards," and enjoyed their mental images, like their beer, "with lots of body." They were all in great good humour (Gills especially). Adams chuckled plethorically, quaffed the British beer with gratitude, and uttered the words, oracularly, "Pig brand!" They only played for small stakes, for with most of them the "exchequer was low." Gills and Joseph had lost, and after tea demanded their revenge. Their opponents

in point of honour could not refuse. Oysters were brought in, and more beer, every one in great good humour, and the game went on till long past midnight.

The next day Joseph again called his charge and gave him all sorts of good advice.

Austin's time was now well occupied to be sure. The routine of study brought discipline. His vague imaginations were being brought to the touchstone of reality. Still, there was much that was uncongenial too.

Anfang ist schwer (Beginning is hard) is a venerable old German proverb. *Anfang ist leicht* (easy), says Goethe. So with Austin: The vistas were opening. The delight of increase of experience, addition to power, was a spur; the slow plodding work was a task-master. The husks of preparation he must devour, the kernel never taste. The pilgrimage was a dusty road, the promised land a vision only.

At Richmond House there began to appear too a sort of regularity in the irregular life they lived. Murray rose usually at half-past twelve. Going to the bath his eyes were dis-

coloured, his lips bluish, his face doughy looking. His bath freshened him, and he used to improve progressively during the day, though, as he explained, he never was "in form" till ten o'clock at night. Truth to say the house was happiest when Murráy stayed at home and read Shakespeare in the afternoons, or sometimes—and he seemed to exercise no discrimination in his choice—Calverly, Sheridan, and his favourite poet, Gordon. Sheridan was his great hero, "the most versatile, the most genial of men," he used to say; but he had quaffed the "foaming pot" with Gordon, and often brought in off-hand snatches of quotations from his works.

Ah, 'twas merry in the glowing morn, amid the gleaming grass,

To wander as we've wandered many a mile,
And blow the cool tobacco cloud and watch the white wreaths pass,

Sitting loosely in the saddle all the while.

Ah, there's fragrance there, and Jimmy, a genial kerl, watched his own curling smoke.

Merry in the glowing morn, said Austin

laughing, that must have been *before* you went to bed, J. R. M.

J. R. M. smiled good-naturedly.

My dear young fellow, he said, when you've undergone all the experiences of J. R. M., and formed your intellect accordingly, you will be also able to appreciate a philosophic calm, and J. R. M. poised the long churchwarden bowed amiably all round and drank "The British Beer."

In the evenings too he used often to remain at home till half-past nine, never later, and to the accompaniment of Miss Lyddiard or, if he happened to be there, of Langden, sang his ever-tuneful ditties.

Joseph and J. R. M. were fast friends. They gave each other all their confidences and all their secrets, in fact made an unnecessary show of the latter; and Joseph, rarely given to the expression of sentiment, had been known to say, Ah, where is there another J. R. M.?

Their only point of contention—for with whist on one side and euchre on the other "honours were easy" in cards—and this

they sometimes argued at considerable length, (till Murray's "But my dear Joseph! but my dear Joseph!" became almost objurgatory,) was as to which had the greatest knowledge of the world.

Murray had served several years in a law office, had been used to spend a very considerable allowance of pocket money in his early youth, had, in fact, once—this he made a great point of—lost £90 one night gambling with the Armstrongs and Capt. Devereux, was known to every woman of ill repute in Dudley, had had some experience of life upon his cousin's sheep station, Werrackneroo, and finally enjoyed a most extensive acquaintance and considerable popularity among all the leading talent in the world theatrical. These expanded and elaborated in side issues and innumerable adventures were the chief points on which J. R. M. based his reputation. Joseph was generally beaten in the opinion of the company, as J. R. M. appeared to claim rather a higher grade of society, and, beside his acquaintance with Sir Adolphus Patmouse and Lord Vincent Budd, made

considerable play with Gordon, Lucas Scribe, Clarke, and other shining lights of the literary constellation of the time.

Joseph often recovered ground when in a confidential *tête-à-tête* he endeavoured to make clear that he had seen "deeper into the human heart" than J. R. M. In fact, it was well known that he had so persuaded Miss Lyddiard, who opined that J. R. M.'s real strong points were his "talents and fine gentlemanly feeling."

Besides Murray and Joseph, Crossley and Gulpin were generally out in the evening, and, if to the theatre, sometimes also Miss Letitia.

The genial Gillie, and in this too he obeyed most good-naturedly, was condemned by Joseph to a regimen of study, had certain work set out which Romanoff who was consulted took particular care to make sufficient for the day. Mac was a good worker, and Kithdale Brown was both regular and apparently indefatigable. "Like Homer, he nods at times," said good-natured J. R. M. "*Wakes* at times," amended Romanoff from his better knowledge of Kithdale.

CHAPTER VII.

MISS LYDDIARD was then sometimes left alone and passed the time, playing very badly on the piano, with fancy work and other befitting lady-like accomplishments. These occasions were not frequent, for Joseph's visitors were numerous and Miss Lyddiard's company always had a charm. Mac appeared to have spoken truly when he said that she was a good girl.

Austin would take a small stool and sit beside her, and sometimes they would talk between the music, and sometimes he would hold her hands, and she would call him "a boy," "a little fellow," and laugh and say his cheek was as soft as hers. And sometimes, because he was but a boy—for heaven's sake he must never breathe a

whisper!—she would let him kiss her, and once or twice—such as when all the others had gone out to see the great torchlight procession—she had taken down her wealth of wonderful hair, which Miss Stowbridge declared was dyed, and he had played with its tangles and smothered his face in it, while she laughed and stroked his cheek, and became nervous then; and when he kissed her he once saw great tears in her eyes, and once she wept outright and bitterly, and said —

Oh! Austin, it isn't right; you mustn't kiss me again. Promise me that; on your honour promise!

And to Austin's eyes, as he looked at her earnestly, the tears—he did not know why—had come and wet his lids, and he said it was not right, and promised, and smoothed her hair, but with a different touch.

Kithdale Brown was a plodding and most unimaginative but on the whole most excellent young man. He was also fond of long walks and was delighted to find that the youngster was able to stride out so well.

Kithdale Brown too was a man of purpose in life and of this he never seemed to lose sight: to pass his examinations, get his diploma, and settle down as quickly as possible to a comfortable country practice. If the others laughed sometimes at his sober ways he held his own, and was not entirely uncritical. He told Austin that he had spoken pretty sharply to Murray more than once, told him that he ought to be ashamed of having flung away the splendid chances that he had, ruining his health and breaking his mother's heart. J. R. M., good-natured soul, had forgiven him,—and borrowed a little silver just to show there was no animosity.

Austin had promised his mother not to work at all on Sundays, and often when the weather was too bad for walking, and when he was tired both of reading and sitting alone, and there was only one wanted to make a rubber, to be sure it would have been the merest churlishness to refuse, and so it became the easiest thing in the world to spend half the afternoon at cards. Sometimes they played for oysters—this was an

idea of Romanoff's—a six-handed game, and with “revenge” and “conqueror.” These games were often considerably protracted.

But even Sunday was not always given up to cards. The pretty little village of Templestowe was nine miles off. It was a very nice walk, Kithdale and Austin found. The daughter of mine host of the “Merry England” was a blooming lass of one-and-twenty, and Kithdale, since it could not seriously interfere with his work, permitted himself to indulge a little fancy. She used to sing for them to her sister's accompaniment. She had a sweet voice, and fine eyes, and a “bonny mou’.” It seemed a very simple thing to “prie the bonny mou’.”

Kithdale Brown rather liked Austin, and was very patient with him, for the youngster sorely tried his notions of a decorous demeanour. He used to stand looking into shop windows, and talk of products, prices, wages, and then he used to wander through the markets, watching the moving crowds of people, the buying and selling, and what not.

Kithdale Brown wasn't to be dragged to

such places and he smiled when Austin assured him that the people were really very interesting. What Kithdale, however, found most tedious was Austin's dissertations on such matters as the Bricklayers' assistants' strike, the Workmen's College, or the Dis-establishment of the Church. He never read the paper himself; he didn't see what that had to do with his prospective country practice. Crossley was the only one Austin could get to go with him to pedestrian matches, though sport was so much the topic of the day. Boxing tournaments were more popular. In the art gallery and amidst the statues and busts he had to pass the hours alone. Murray to be sure once in the praiseworthy intention of directing his ideas had accompanied him thither, and had laid it down as a dogma that we could never produce a great artist while we were still at hand grips with nature. Art too, he said, with a wave of the hand that was a complete vindication for himself, art too requires a philosophic calm !

CHAPTER VIII.

BEHOLD a Grecian vase, its proportions, its beauty, completeness. Behold the Parthenon, a temple, simple and august. Behold the electrical machine. An exquisite architectural idea seems to grow out of that too, not in the outward form, but in the tracing out the underlying forces.

Exquisite the idea of the mathematician who looks down from the heights at that great synthetic plan and sees not Arithmetic, Quaternions, Calculus, but, simply, throughout the whole chainage and network, the relations of series to series. He holds nothing—lo! it is a chart of the world.

Happier that chart to the physicist. That world, in his little domain, has been also an experience.

Happier the naturalist, seeing less subtly, but larger, and seeing no rent in the garment.

In the progress of the mind's development the episodes arrive when a strange idea is beheld, a new form of thought, a new manner of application of the mind, faintly, in the dim depths, a vision, and, in the course of the revolving moons, the vision has taken substance, the form is distinct, the task has become real. Who can tell of the pain and the joy in the lonely march of the thinker—Aristotle, Descartes, Locke, or Kant?

Speak rather of the comfort, the *cuisine bourgeoise*, of the man of the world. Thrice-blessed mediocrity! The mind of imitation, receptivity, conformity—that is the serviceable mind. Its deficiencies are an aid to success.

The mind of depth, originality, largeness of view, grasps more slowly its work. Results follow later. Meanwhile the man has fallen, unsuccoured.

Who can outstrip his time either in wisdom or lofty ideal?

And what is the food of bold spirits—fame, love, and power?

No; rather it must be some comfort or stay less dependent on these chances, otherwise he will famish on the heights. Yes, the loss is his, and all but the hardiest succumb.

In this way, too, of ten thousands, we are bound to our race. The reigning of Folly endures, and the progress of our civilization is marked by the sacrifice of those who have brought freedom and light. Drink the hemlock, O son of the hewer of blocks. Play the farce, Galileo. Stand in the pillory, Hume.

Where the world is mad—there, too, institutions, laws, interests, ambition, and pelf—the mighty unconscious framework of the living is mad. Behold the wars of our own day, the cult of sensuality, the mummeries, the fetiches, farces.

And in the foul air the fairest flowers of creation struggle to grow.

Where is the outlet? Where the hope? Where the stay? Where the impulse?

Speak, ye martyrs! Speak, Socrates! Prometheus! Ye to whom the resistless

flame has been given, all who have even in manifold errors yet felt within you the power to suffer for something that has seemed greater than your own lives, or that, rightly spoken, may have been the main purport or meaning of your lives. Zeno to Shelley.

And the fair flowers? No, they have not all struggled into their ample life. Those who have kept their ideals untarnished are of that race seldom seen amongst mortal men who "die but once." Yet strike, Virginius. For it is better to be the martyr of virtue than to be a creature of harlotry. It is a mad doctrine, but it is a madness divine.

* * * * *

Of intellectual sins it is especially difficult to draw up a clear account.

The principle of forethought, could we see as a God sees, would doubtless open up for us a strange region, of which our little rules are but an ineffective measure.

Down to the ocean, the dry land, the season's changes, its analysis would lead. For surely of those forms we mark as of virtue or of vice, of the mechanism of our thoughts,

complexity of feeling, the starting point is this : Man, a machine, or system of uncertain conditions, but all within a series of little cycles, thrown into a world of vaster cycles—our principles, our philosophic laws, are but the dim schematic frame of this. In the perturbations of the lesser part, ourselves, and the huge vicissitudes of the larger part, the world that lies about us, our weak designs are shattered in the storm.

CHAPTER IX.

AUSTIN had lost his inward comfort, but a peculiar look of patience had grown into his face. Joseph saw that he was sickening.

You have been working too hard, Austin, of late, he said, and there was a gentleness in his tone. You should take a spell. Overworked, he said, explanatorily to Mac, still looking at his charge. You ought to go to the theatre. Yes, to-night's the night for *Othello*, and you're an admirer of Fairchild's. What do you say, Mac? Let us all go. Come, Austin, it will do you good.

Austin had felt a chilly, creepy feeling coming over him as though of the approach of some illness, but hoped to tide over it by "keeping up his pluck."

On the way down he was in high spirits,

and even Joseph descended not a little from the more severe air of authority with which he usually regarded him, and hinted to Mac in a loud aside that he was fairly enough satisfied with him. Mac took his arm and declared it was like old times.

Fairchild was easy and complete as "Iago." Joseph took something more than an artistic interest in the wife of that cynical individual, winking knowingly at Mac, and calling her Jessie, and then whispering a few confidences, which seemed to be very amusing; and Mac himself was lost in admiration of the lack-a-daisical beauty who played the part of "Desdemona."

After the theatre they strolled up and down the streets a little, and called in at the Rainbow and the Truss of Hay, and following Joseph's particular recommendation drank whisky. Next morning, however, Austin was unable to rise.

Show me your tongue? said Joseph, examining him in true professional style. He was in a bad state, and seemed to be getting worse. Joseph carried him to his room.

Through days of delirium he and Mac nursed him with almost the unselfishness of women, and brought him round. They were nearly worn out, and their examinations were close at hand.

Austin knew it all when he recovered, and as he lay awake, weak, patient, thinking of the good and of the ill of wayward human hearts, like a foolish youngster wept.

The others came to his room often. It was cheerful to see them. Miss Lyddiard, with the yellow hair, used to smooth his pillow, and Miss Stowbridge and Gulpin made him innocently smile. For Gulpin would steal her fan, and while she was looking everywhere for it, and couldn't find it, he would step up behind and touch her elbow with it slyly. Oh, you did give such a little jump, he used to say, and Miss Letitia giggled and called him "a little, little, I don't know what, there now," and many such interesting adventures not unknown to lovers happened.

And Gills read Shakespeare to him in a tragic voice. And on one occasion Romanoff and Langden were there, and Romanoff felt

his pulse and took his temperature, and Langden sagely warned him against the dangers of over-study.

The conversation ranged at large, and turned upon, of all things in the world, the fine points of orthodoxy. Mac averred his belief that Austin's affliction was a punishment sent direct from Heaven for want of observance of the rites by Holy Church imposed.

Sorrow was expressed for this, but Mac was challenged by Romanoff on the point, and a little argument began to rise, when Joseph rushed into the fray much incensed, and if a little irregular in discourse certainly not the less energetic, for he had a clear point in view: It's a mean and cowardly thing to deny your religion. If it's not in favour that's all the more reason why you should stick to it. But it is in favour, and going ahead too! Look at the presents the Pope got last year, and Gladstone's sister is a Catholic too, and what Father Delany said at the meeting the other night! And Luther only changed

because he wanted to get married, and Elizabeth burned a good many more from bigotry than Queen Mary, if the records were only searched out. Ha! Good Queen Bess they call her! Ah, murdered Mary Queen of Scots! Your father's a Catholic and your mother's a Catholic, and you've been always brought up as a Catholic, and you don't know what you're saying when you talk like that. I'd like your father to hear you, that's all. Ha!—And he now turned to Romanoff—To hear a fellow talk like that. And perhaps he thinks Catholics are not popular at the University. But they are if they only got fair play. Heh!

And Joseph looked about him with an air of righteous indignation. Langden appeared as though he were about to take him up on the Queen Elizabeth, but as Joseph had continued to the Mary Queen of Scots he had conciliatorily subjoined —

Most beautiful hands of any woman of her age.

Romanoff pulled out his moustache with both hands, as was his custom, with that smile of his, and looked inquiringly at Austin.

Oh, drop the subject, for heaven's sake, said Mac.

I was pretty near solving the Great Doubt for myself this time, said Austin; but somehow I thought it was not to be, and I was content to see it through, even without the comforts of the Church.

My dear Joseph, said Romanoff, calm yourself. My dear Joseph, we must bear and forbear one with the other, you know. There are many points, my dear Joseph, where you are but a foolish, good-natured old soul, and so we put up with it. Would I refuse to drink a glass of beer with a man because he was a Catholic?

No, I suppose not, said Joseph.

He saw no chance of contesting that conclusion.

Well, then, why should you become excited and lose that natural dignity which, I may say, and he looked all round for

approval, so well becomes you, because I or Austin differ from you here. You're quite right, Austin, he continued, turning to him with distinct patronage. Then, if you've got so far, Austin, you can't swallow that pretty little story about the fig leaves. Very true, it can still be kept for the nursery, if Josephus would insist on it, along with Sleeping Beauty and the Beast and Jack the Giant Killer.

Austin laughed.

And as to Christ, said he, turning to Austin.

Austin started.

My dear Josephus, be calm. You are a little excited to-day. This foggy weather doubtless. You have heard Charles here sing his famous song often enough, and not without an appearance of enjoyment.

Oh, that's different, said Joseph, moodily.

Austin's quite right, continued Romanoff, though I confess I had not expected it. Look here, Joseph, old boy, this Christian religion is a sham, and further interferes much with our good pleasure. The world

would have a much more comfortable outlook without it. My dear Joseph, if once the idea penetrated your topsy-turvy old skull you'd be the first yourself to take up the new gospel. A man could then have the woman he wanted, and when he was tired of her—why then he could take another. Now the business is a much more wearisome one, and no one the better and everyone a damnable hypocrite. "Thou art smitten, oh! Lord, thou art smitten," he recited from his favourite poet Swinburne, as he stuck his hands into his pockets, and hunched up his back and looked down before him, screwing up his features like a Mephistopheles. "Thy curse is upon Thee, O Lord." Take every chance you get, Joseph, and he slapped the still moody Joseph on the shoulder. La Mettrie's my philosopher, but you don't know anything about him, Joseph. When the curtain drops, why, *tout cela*. The farce is over. *Tirez le rideau, la farce est jouée*.

He turned to Austin, but Austin averted his eyes.

A silence succeeded. Langden murmured

something about Nellie Fairfax in the newest opera, but even his happy talent failed for once, and so they left. Joseph puffed vigorously at his pipe, Mac began copying out his notes, and Austin lay still occupied with his own thoughts.

CHAPTER X.

THE year was now approaching rapidly an end ; the laziest of the students were beginning to feel some pressure, "to begin to commence," as Gillie put it.

Kithdale Brown and Mac had plodded on steadily all through. Romanoff was considered to know his work splendidly. Langden and Schultless, by dint of reading up old examination papers and noting the style of the professors closely and by one and another wily art, had acquired a great reputation as "tipsters" of possible questions. They tipped, as they called it, separately, brought their results then together, and out of ten questions on the paper it was hard indeed if they did not pick out four at least, possibly five or more, and half was all that was

necessary to secure a pass. In this way, Langden, lightly accoutred to be sure but with all his wits about him, and confining his attention with a strictness that satisfied Joseph himself, prepared himself for examination. His advice was much sought by intimate friends, and even Romanoff thought it by no means derogatory to his dignity to consult with him seriously and be thankful for his hints.

Joseph kept Gillie well at it, and that rubicund youth too seemed to feel some particular spur, perhaps the thoughts of returning home to the bosom of his family laden with honours and looked up to and praised by his admiring sisters.

Murray was the only one whose buoyant course was not to be interrupted by such a freshman's trouble as the approach of an examination day. He had survived too many and knew well what the worst of it was.

My dear fellow, he declared to Austin one day, when the latter had excused himself from a game of cards on the score of time,

my dear fellow, Time was made for slaves. But, here, if you don't mind I wish you'd show me a point in this Nat. Phil. I'm content to allow you one there.

It was an amiable trait of J. R. M. that he cheerfully acknowledged the superior excellence of others, that is when he really saw it. Thus we have seen that he granted Joseph's superiority in euchre, and the question of knowledge of the world consented at least to discuss. Romanoff he had great respect for, though he questioned his pronunciation of French; and he and Langden were accustomed to hold very interesting conversations on the little ceremonies and modes that appertained to life polite. Jimmy was nothing if not a stickler for etiquette.

I can never understand you fellows, continued J. R. M.; there was little Purcell who used to sit beside me at school, and who had nothing in him at all. I took no particular credit in beating him.—J. R. M. was here modest. His school record had been brilliant.—Well, he puzzled and

pottered away with his little retail dealer's talent for figures, and now they say he has a good show of being Senior Wrangler. But here's the point, and he showed Austin the book. J. R. M. worked away, or rather talked a lot about it for nearly half-an-hour. This was the fair sum total of his year's study. Ach, he cried at last, flinging the book into a corner, J. R. M. was never made for stuff like that, dear boy. It is all very well for the plodders—men of congealed and coagulated sap—but not for me. Thank heaven, Dr. Neill says they can teach mathematics to idiots. That's some comfort.

Austin smiled, and Jimmy, looking up, caught him.

Yes, it is very funny though, isn't it? he cried, joining in. There was Macaulay and Byron and Sheridan—all the poets, you know—not one of them could ever do a stroke of mathematics. But you don't drink your beer, young man.

No, I don't care about it.

The carelessness of the tone was not to go unrebuked.

Well, then, let me tell you this, some of the greatest men that ever lived have not despised their liquor. Look at Byron, look at Gordon himself, and Sheridan, the most gifted of mortals. "His wit was incessant and of a high order."—Austin shrewdly guessed that J. R. M. was quoting from the little note-book now. He had suspected latterly that Murray's effective knowledge was summed up there.—And Lord Byron said of him that he had done the best in everything that he had undertaken. "Such was Sheridan; he could melt an attorney."

That monody on Sheridan is wonderfully good, said Austin appreciatively.

H'm! and J. R. M. thought of his note-book, I haven't looked at that quite recently, and, h'm, ha! monody—on Sheridan. Look here, he continued in a friendly way, for J. R. M. was not a man to creep into the jaundice by being peevish, you have parts, little Brandt, if you would but be guided. I don't mind saying it, but you ought to have more respect for the opinions of men older and, may I say, more experienced than

yourself, and endeavour to be a little more genial and social in your ways.

Thus having admonished him J. R. M. was all good humour again, trolled out "The Gallants of England," and as Austin left him relapsed to kill a somewhat tedious quarter of an hour into the "Biography of John Mytten, M.P."

Murray had concluded from the results of his half-hour study that his chances of passing his examination were but meagre, and appeared for the next two days a little troubled. He had declared at dinner that he was "right as a trivet if it weren't for that one little pokey hole-in-a-corner subject," and once he had thrown off this particular incubus, "J. R. M. would sail through his course."

And then, Mr. Murray, with your gifts and your manner success would be a certainty.

Mr. Murray bowed and was happy, "as jolly as a sandboy," he said.

That night there was a social evening of "The Shop," and Murray had kindly persuaded Joseph to let Gillie go.

He has been going a gunner lately, and it will help him to wear off his greenness.

Gillie was becoming painfully conscious of this greenness, for Wilson "threw it up to him in a very nasty way" in argument (and Gills was fond of argument, and really did watch the game closely—the arguments were generally on football). He thanked J. R. M. for his kind offices.

Have courage, Gillie, my boy, said J. R. M., slapping him on the shoulder, I'll make you one after my own kidney.

And so they went together.

Joseph who was zealous on the whole for Austin's worldly welfare explained to him after they were gone that Murray's "exchequer" was low—it was always low—that Gillie's, on the other hand, as he neither smoked nor drank, or, at least, very seldom (just recently they had not played cards, except on Sundays) happened to be fairly high. Further, he warned him never to lend Murray money.

He was rather late in the day, however, with his advice, for on many occasions

Austin's heart had succumbed to the circumstantial and pitiable stories of Jimmy's little perplexity—"just for a few days, you know, old fellow. Sorry to mention the matter, but, between friends, you know, J. R. M. never forgets a debt of honour—never!"

That was true. He knew well who were "good marks." Kithdale Brown was the only man who was ever known to secure a refund—half-quittance—but Kithdale Brown was a man of character. J. R. M. laid great store, certainly, by the precedent of the illustrious Sheridan; but even this did not prevent him, such was the sensibility of his nature, from becoming quite confused when the subject of a little debt was mentioned, and wondering how it could have escaped his memory. And so, out of consideration for him, it was esteemed "not usual," as in fact it was hopeless, to desire repayment.

However, Gills put himself under his wing in great good humour, and there were symptoms even that delighted Murray by showing that Gills would yet be a man who would keep

alive the old traditions, in the way in which he had bowed adieu to Miss Lyddiard —

Well, ta, ta, for the present, Lyddie, dear. We won't be long ; but—ah ! yes—don't sit up for us.

Gillie's arrival home was, indeed, sooner than had been expected.

It was half-past eleven when tramp, crash, bump, crash—was anyone attempting to drive a horse and cart upstairs ? No ; it was only the “not-to-be-by-Lyddie-dear-waited-up-for Gills.”

I want to see Austin Brandt ! he was bawling out at the top of his voice, and then laughing immensely. I want to see Austin Brandt ! He made for Joseph's room, where Mac was working still, and Joseph making various reflections on the perversity of his charges. Gills was roaring out, “ I want to see Austin Brandt ! ”

Austin came running forward and laughed very much at the appearance Gills cut in his “first drunk,” as they called it, as necessary a thing to be undertaken as a Member's maiden speech.

Gillie's face was furiously rubicund, and his whitish hair was standing out at all angles, in which, however, no regular plan was traceable; his eyes seemed florid with excitement, though rather indistinctly as to what, and he still cried out, in the presence of that individual, "I want to see Austin Brandt!"

He was moved to no further speech, but after contemplating Austin fixedly, burst out into a fit of uncontrollable laughter, until one feared for the safety of the rubicund youth.

Jimmy Murray's broke his arm! he gasped out at last, and exploded again. Jimmy Murray—explosion—broke his arm—explosion—the right one—explosion—in a sling—explosion—slipped down—explosion—on an orange peel—explosion—near the wrist—explosion!

Austin, conjecturing, from what he understood of Gillie's spasmodic utterances, that Murray had met with a painful accident, was not a little astonished that Gills, who both admired and had a real affection for the

“only J. R. M.,” should display so little feeling.

In *vino veritas*, but surely in this case drink had perverted and rendered devilish a nature not originally bad. Or was it that the cultivation of humour, which was so earnest an aim with the gilded youth of that period, had developed in Gills in so high a grade as to stifle the voice of humanity itself! Gills rolled on to Joseph’s bed, screamed, and kicked violently into the unresisting air and tugged the drabbish hair into the four points of heaven.

Mac and Joseph too were laughing, and Austin turned to them for an explanation.

It appeared, then, that Murray’s breakage was as fictitious as parts of the British law—a “friendly action,” in fact. J. R. M., so Joseph explained, for Gills could only laugh, had been all the year through assuring his mama not only of his industry but also of his success, and had built her hopes very high that this time, at last, he “would begin to commence.” The old lady was looking forward to that course which he himself had so boldly

figured unto a nautical procession. As the time drew near therefore he was at his wits' ends to escape conviction. This it appeared was the solution.

The next day Murray appeared with his arm in a sling and showed a knack of slipping his bandages off and on.

Austin heard in Joseph's room a series of loudly detonating sounds, and going to discover the cause found Langden and Murray practising at a target on the wall with a small revolver which the former had bought. Romanoff and Gills had just finished their chemistry and the room was thick with the clouds of tobacco smoke.

Hallo ! said Austin, in some surprise, the good neighbours will think that something serious is happening here !

The good neighbours, said Murray, in a tone of some severity, will think it is but the eccentricity of medical students, and will pardon it accordingly, and he held up his pistol to take aim.

He had dropped it in a moment, though, with an utter recklessness of what might

happen to the aristocratic form of Langden and rushed for his bandages.

Pull out the cork of the H_2S bottle, he cried, and start to work again, Gills. Quick!

He had heard a well-known voice at the foot of the stairs, and there was just time for him to adjust the bandages and for Gills and Romanoff to resume their labour, coats off, and Langden to supervise it, looking sagely into the "Life of John Mytton, M.P.," for guidance, when the door opened, and her frail steps supported by Miss Letitia the old lady entered.

Murray's back was turned at the time.

Beautiful precipitate, he called out, as Romanoff held up his test tube; then, turning—What! Well, this is a surprise, my dear Mama!

He hurried to get a chair.

Ah, dear James, this is fearful. All your hard work for the year gone by one stupid accident. Cannot anything be done?

Murray shook his head most gravely.

No, he was afraid nothing could be done.

Oh, dear—the poor old lady was short

of breath after ascending the stairs. But how close the room is, and what a disagreeable odour.

Ah, yes, said J. R. M., we've just been doing chemistry and we must keep our pipes in mouth to drive away the smell. See here, mother, and with great applause he went through a little experiment of pouring two colourless mixtures together and producing a black precipitate.

Oh, how mad I was with myself! for I was certain this time. I might even manage the practical chemistry with one hand but then what's the use?

Yes, broke in Gills, we were sure J. R. M. would pass this time. It's a fearful pity!

Gills felt that Murray's opinion of him as a man likely to do credit to the old traditions had ascended another grade.

My dear Mama, said Murray, and the poor old lady, with her white hair and her neat black lace cap, and her good kind motherly face, looked at him with the tears in her eyes, my dear Mama, I will try every resource known to surgery,—and you know

yourself the advances we have made within the last ten years,—I will apply the most energetic means if I can only use it a couple of hours on the day of the exam. I don't care how much worse it might become afterwards! It might lead to a fever or a necrosis! I would get over that.

No, that was not to be thought of. The health of her boy was worth more to her than the examination—much as she had set her heart on this.

How good of you, Mama, he said with some unctuation, to come over to-day. I intended to have gone after dinner. This little amusement, and he waved his hand towards the chemicals, kept me this afternoon. But, Mama, will you stay and have dinner with us?

They all expressed the pleasure it would give them if Mrs. Murray would dignify their little board; she on the contrary wished to take James with her.

He thought for a moment.

Well, we'll return with you, Mama, but must come back, eh, Gills?

The old lady to be sure had not invited Gills, but Murray was a man of wit, and so he and Gills assisted her gallantly downstairs.

Now, Gillie, the other side. Remember my broken limb.

Gillie violently attacked with a fit of coughing obeyed.

Now, Mama, you are supported by two trusty cavaliers ; step bravely, ah ! see there now. I can still do my duty, you see. And have you been quite tip-top yourself, *ma chere* ? You are looking just a little tired. You must not distress yourself you know.

So gentlemanly he is, said Miss Letitia Stowbridge, whom Austin met on the stairs.

Blackguard ! said Austin.

Yes, replied Miss Stowbridge, it is a thorough shame. The poor old lady feels it, I know, much more than she ever lets on. She is nearly heartbroken over his course and this has been quite a hard blow to her. She pays everything for him and gives him pocket money, and he dodges money out of

her in every way he can, and I know for a fact too that she has to pinch herself now to give it to him, because she lost a lot of money lately, but she doesn't tell him—went into a speculation over a new brick company that promised so much, Mr. McCallum was the secretary—such a nice man. . . .

CHAPTER XI.

AND so at last too Austin's first year at the University had come to an end. Gills, Langden, Romanoff, and MacDermott were successful; Joseph, Brown, and Summer-ville unsuccessful.

Austin was once more at home.

How often and how vividly had the images come back to him in Dudley—The desire even to touch again familiar objects, to drink a cup of water from the old pump, to sit in his corner where he had nourished the firstlings of his thoughts, to stride along his old familiar walk and feel his heart beat high. The University to be sure he had found "different" to his anticipations; more deeply than he guessed, for who can trace out the subtle things that mould and move one.

The greetings over and the thousand and one questions on both sides answered there was opportunity to observe the changes. Scarcely any could Austin perceive in the old home and its surroundings. There was a sense of peace about it and durability.

But you seem to have vanished into two big eyes, said Jessie, his sister, the wife of Dr. Gray, as she looked at him critically. Have you then studied so very hard?

He was thin, pale, his eye had lost lustre.

These things should not have been. A degree were but a bauble to a man who lacked the vim to use it, opined Matthew Brandt solidly; and old Mrs. McKenna, one of the neighbours, hinted that he was going into "some or ither decline."

Matthew Brandt had looked carefully into the "Garden of the Soul," and was now upon the track of the solution for this unhappy state of things. The Bible had likewise been too little overhauled, thought good Mrs. Brandt, and questioned Austin with some particularity about religious offices. His replies were after the manner of

parables, but as far as they went discouraging. Her motherly soul was much distressed.

Matthew Brandt was a man of much feeling and kindness of heart but a man who never swerved from duty. Better the youngster sacrifice his course than doubts crop up. He said so much, but meant a great deal more. Nay, what profiteth it a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul? He gave Austin, therefore, at first a little rest, then, after consultation with Father Clancy, a certain interesting series of books was provided for the backsliding neophyte. Matthew Brandt was not punctilious as to ceremonies, but faith in fundamental doctrines was the breath of life—the more so, he said, and made a great point of this, because that faith was unpopular. Austin seeking vaguely, it is true, for the truth of the matter, and not yet inured to the rapture of polemical strife which is to the Big-Endians and the Little-Endians the breath of their nostrils, had tried to get hold of that argument and stumbled rather awkwardly.

Matthew Brandt knew nothing of his state of mind. Austin was beyond his help.

And so the matter stood. The elder, not telling him how many books he had in store, gave him No. 1 to read. Austin had not expected to be questioned on it. He must read it again. Matthew Brandt was not the man to indulge a slovenly habit of mind, and Austin seeing no hope finished it to his satisfaction. Then came No. 2. This to be sure was tedious — too bad, thought Austin. He was weary and not well. No. 2 was done badly, but Matthew Brandt was a firm man. Austin could do better, and he must.

Austin had always regarded his father with a sense of awe, and now he was beginning to feel this vital difference between them ; he felt it distressingly. Those may know who have experienced it. He wished to hide it within himself ; he wished to get away and rest, and meditate in solitude ; he wished to sleep the livelong day under his tree on Wattle-blossom hill ; he wished to forget for a brief season and begin anew ; he

wished to fling away these dusty husks of life; he wished he was dead. Matthew Brandt was an erect spirit, but then Abraham would have slaughtered Isaac.

No. 2 was finished to satisfaction. Then came No. 3 and the course seemed synthetic.

Austin was downcast. But even the worm will turn. He read No. 3 with peculiar care, and made notes on it, and asked for No. 1 and No. 2 again, and made notes on them, and made notes of Nos. 4 and 5. These books were synthetic. This was very satisfactory to Matthew Brandt but of a grimmer satisfaction to Austin himself.

This business occupied the whole of his vacation; meanwhile we will here take note.

CHAPTER XII.

AUSTIN was still engaged in No. 2 of the series his father had so thoughtfully provided, and had not yet discovered his own peculiar interest in it.

Matthew Brandt could he have seen his monstrous impiety would have cast him out of heart, and home, and house.

Thoughts of force brought into being all the devils in the youngster's mind, and, for our destinies are early vaguely shadowed forth, he felt that he was setting his adventurous sails where charts might little aid. With this prospect he was becoming familiar and avoiding for the present troublous contentions he used to slip off to go out shooting with Ben Church, or help, as he said, Jack Clancy and Sam Chubb at their windlass.

Mrs. Gray, it is true, had attempted several times to bring him within the sphere of more refined influences, for at her house musical evenings were something of an institution and glees and rounds had been carried even to a fair degree of excellence. And Mrs. Gray's most particular friend was a lady whom she seemed to regard as possessed of every virtue under the sun, and to whom she had often besought Austin to be introduced. Mrs. Gray was a kind sister, but above all things a practical person, a good sensible woman, compact and healthy. The stars to her were specks in the sky, the sun gave light but for the round of duties day by day and sober satisfactions, such as came. She had read Byron, though, even when quite a girl, keeping it hid in her bedroom and devouring it perturbedly at night. It was always with a tone of bitterness that she used to mention the noble poet afterwards, returning to the point even with a certain predilection. She exercised her satire upon Austin.

You scowl prettily and look askance like

that picture of the Corsair in the "Byron Illustrated," "a thing of dark imaginings," or fold your arms, and are as "sad as night." You are certainly haggard enough for Manfred. No doubt your feelings are intense. Or perhaps Don Juan is now your hero, and perhaps you would, with the weak vanity of a young man, make the school girls jump with stories of your wickedness, and think that a fellow is nothing of a fellow unless he is a devil of a fellow. It is not through study only that you get pale and wretched, and,—I know these things as well as you do!

You've harped on the Byronic strain long enough, but your shrewdness has not hit the mark this time. As a matter of fact, though, said he laughing, Byron is irresistibly witty, is he not? What George? What Third? That amuses me hugely in the "Vision of Judgment"—

He read an article the King attacking,
And a long eulogy of patent blacking,—
That savoured of this world.

* * * * *

He loved the gentle Spaniard for his gravity,
He almost honoured him for his docility,
Because though young he acquiesced with suavity,
Or contradicted but with proud humility.

Austin continued to quote Byron with immense delight.

But Byronism, as you call it, is not my special trouble. See here—and he held up No. 2—this is my spiritual food. Now I ask you read this little passage and tell me seriously if I can grow well nourished upon that.

Really I don't quite understand it, said Mrs. Gray, after knitting her eyebrows and reading it again. William is also a little mad on this wretched subject. It's the plague of my life. I'll tell you some day. You see green eyes are not the only things we have in common.

Faith, said Austin, oracularly, is the evidence of things unseen. You were not required to understand. You are demanded to believe, or so at least I am. If I were to declare to father my little difficulty in throwing this into rational form he would exorcise,

even at the very stake I think, the devil that is in me, if so he might save my soul alive. But who is this lady you had wished to tell me of ?

Oh, it doesn't matter.

But, by Jupiter, it does matter ! Who is she ?

* * * * *

Austin was walking in the garden after the evening meal, and, all unbidden, meditations of what is good and fair were coming, and pictures boldly painted forth swept into his mind as certain as palpable forms.

Here a colonnade of Grecian pillars, and beyond, out through the portals, is the sky's soft blue. The air is balmy with a sort of yellow mist in the cool glow of the evening ; a woman's form, graceful, and lingering awhile, pensive to these tender influences, stands, while the sound of music falls upon her ear, between the mighty pillars. . . . O wizard touch of memory ! Such now arise, seem to awake within me now, rich and rare, surrounded with that atmosphere, that finer stuff of feeling, that merges in the realm of

fairyland. A window in the light of sunset. The beams play with their finest colours on the pane. A sweet face in the dim half dusk. . . . Here are two young girls seated side by side at the piano. How lightly the smiles break over their faces, how fresh their complexions; their heads bend gracefully, and their eyes are full of light, and the music is awaked. . . . And these somewhat tender thoughts that had come into his mind unbidden when meditating Mrs. Gray's description of her friend made him now impatient to see that lady herself.

Austin was sitting on the sofa with Dr. Gray who was working the subject round to his particular theme of madness. The doctor was as rigid a Particular Baptist as Matthew Brandt a Catholic, and had hopes of securing Austin too. Meanwhile they had agreed that these were strange times, that wars were more disastrous than they used to be, and that that was due largely to the increased size of armies and the superiority of instruments of destruction—that the power of Russia was a menace to Europe, and that by

our own exertions after all we can do very little—when the door opened and Mrs. Gray and Mrs. Shenstone appeared. Austin rose and met her coming forward, and, blushing and delighted, pressed her hand and stood looking into her face. A sweet face it was, still so young and fresh, and smiling with a look that knew no guile. Her figure was almost girlish yet, being so graceful. She appeared too a little embarrassed how to address Austin, and called him Mr. Brandt.

Call him Austin, said Mrs. Gray, you knew him as a child, and he declares you kissed him once.

Mrs. Shenstone blushed a little, said that must have been a very long time ago, called him Austin with a little effort, and inquired about his studies.

Austin carefully explained to her that his malaise was merely accidental, the result of a chill, which to be sure might happen to anyone, she agreed; that he was still plodding at No. 2—at which the doctor pricked up his ears and started a simile of a newborn babe to prove that the Particular

Baptists were really the Church, when Mrs. Gray reminded him of the prescription that Charlton's little girl would be calling for directly.

Austin began to talk of what he would do next year and Mrs. Shenstone smiled, and he was thinking what a sympathetic face she had, when Dr. Gray came in with his arms full of books which he seemed anxious to begin on at once. This being received but coldly, he lent them all to Austin, especially recommending Leslie's "Short Way with the Deists," "The Coming Man," Jawkins and Chowdler's "Experimental Faith," and last, but not least, "Quiet Thoughts on Purgatory, by a Country Clergyman."

And then they had some music, and Dr. Gray who possessed a grand bass voice and portly presence vociferated, "A will-o'-the-wisp am I," and then Mrs. Shenstone sang, sweeping them all away with her pathos, the ballad, "Way down the Swanny River."

The youngster began to brighten now. His cheeks regained their colour, his step its elasticity, and the old walk its charm.

So too, what with dreams in solitude and many good influences, the days flew by. And he was not wholly happy ; nay, often very unhappy. For when he pressed her hand too warmly she returned it very coldly, and when he sulked she did not seem to notice it, and when he returned to better behaviour she was so natural and so genial that he wondered she could be so heartless, then began to be ashamed of thinking of such things at all, and held her in great respect.

Faith Winifred Shenstone, to give her her full title, was the most graceful little girl in the world, with her face already crossed with a tone of sweet seriousness. So one could think, looking at her sitting at the side table at her little school tasks, and leaning her head a moment on her hand while her fingers ran through the light brown hair and brushed it from the forehead, and the light of the shaded lamp was soft, and to Austin, who was sitting on the other side and by accident near her mother, all this made a picture that he never from that hour forgot.

Bring your book here, Winnie, and let Austin see it. He ought to be able to give you good advice.

And the diligent little scholar came forward book in hand, and Austin noticed the tasteful costume and the shapely limbs, and she gave him the book, and he laid it on his knee and took the two little hands in his, and she looked at her mama and then looked at Austin, and the white little row of teeth showed in the parted lips as she smiled half confidently, and he pressed her hands with their soft warmth to his cheeks and to his lips, and then while she listened with great attention and nodded her head, criticized the book.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE days were wearing on, and good Mrs. Brandt in a foolish motherly way was filled with many hopes and fears and many fond solitudes.

She had received a letter from a lady who was Austin's godmother. It recalled the day of the christening. How long ago! The memories of that day were sweet, when in the silence of her chamber thinking of her own life, and of the lives of those about her, and of the life to come, and in the ecstasy of a mother's heart she had knelt beside the breathing creature in the cot, her child, and, with tears of joy, stilled then by the reverence of her soul, had lifted up her voice to the Mediator, the Saviour, praying that, with a love greater than her own, the Divine Being

claim him for His, guard his life, give him grace, direct him to the great everlasting duty.

And then, lingering on these associations, she thought of the little godmother of that day, her own friend—the winsome smile, the charm of the two blue eyes, the touch of the gentle hands, the nestling of the fair head on her shoulder that day. She was a being to love. And what had become of her since? She had departed a happy bride, wealth had fallen to her feet; in brilliant halls she had borne her part, and she had never written since till now.

This would be good for Austin. She was half-afraid when she pictured how brilliant his career would be. But disguising these imaginations, she sought him out and delivered exhortations.

Austin, she said seriously, put away that book and listen to me. Nothing looks so well, I repeat, in a man, whether with talents or without talents, as a polished style, and nothing is more conspicuous than a sort of awkwardness of address. I have never had

the opportunity even to attempt to cultivate fine manners; but I have still never affected to undervalue them. I have often seen very foolish people keep a whole company interested; whereas a deficiency of manner seems to make one diffident and constrained.

Austin could not repress a smile, remembering, as for instance, when members of Parliament called at the house, or when the topic was somewhat philosophical, his mother's keenness in debate and the very capable way in which she used to knock the tinsel off a showy speech.

I am trying to picture you, he said, flirting a fan after the style of Louis XV.'s Court, and practising your bows before a mirror, and pitching your voice precisely to the required shade of sophistication. After all, what can be better than to appear naturally what you are? and if that be defective endeavour at least to improve it from within, not bedizen it from without. "It is the cat's *skeleton* makes it graceful," Emerson says. And when I used to wander through the gallery in Dudley by the hour I saw in

those Greek statues what I thought, too, would have been your own ideal—simplicity, greatness, nudity, purity. Yes. But this effervescence of style—it is weariness of the flesh, these finicking manners, this gingerbread of talk —

Yes, Austin; but that's not all. This finicking style is not politeness, but —

Stop, stop! cried Austin, holding up his hands and laughing. I know your monologue voice. You are going to show me the virtues of suavity and the conversational graces, and you won't let me go till I am pretty well black and blue with them. Therefore, I will give in, and meditate on what you say, for truly, he said puzzling oddly, a great deal seems to depend on the company to be amused.

The conversation continued for some time, until Mrs. Shenstone and a number of others appeared. It was pleasant to meet her always, pleasant to meet her on a morning walk, or to drive with her to a picnic, not less charming at afternoon tea, but perhaps best of all when she sang. Matthew Brandt,

though a reverend man, believed that her Scotch songs were better than *Æolian* harps. She was like a witch, he said, as himself and Dr. Gray discussed a glass of whisky.

Am I then so old and ugly? Mrs. Shennstone inquired, very archly.

Faith, then, I think they have taken the other shape of late, Matthew Brandt declared amid great applause, and one could easily believe it when afterwards she gave them "Coming through the Rye."

And Austin and she were walking home together. It was the first time they had ever been alone, and she began to scold him for taxing his duty so far.

You know that Dr. and Mrs. Gray would willingly have come, and I am sure they would have endeavoured a little more to entertain me.

H'm, and so goes life! To eat and drink, to toil in a dull enough way, and catch at each passing little pleasure—amusements, geegaws.

Well, but Austin, what can one do at Tarylvale? There are so few people here

that we have to be content with trifles, and we must eat and drink all the same.

H'm, to lap our souls in this frivolity, to dangle this bauble and that, to follow shadows, deck ourselves with tinsel. No, this is not happiness. It is only when we have passed through sorrow and drained its cup and felt its smart upon our inmost fibres that our life thence can be built.

Rubbish, Austin! If you talk like that I could scarcely thank you for your escort at all.

Ach! How weary seems this dull vulgarity of life, the workaday concerns! For I nerve myself—I sometimes feel it race like madness in my blood—I could at every test play with my life as stake—to fling myself into a brighter, higher sphere, find that object that my soul could clasp and bind to its life's work. But where the outcome? Where?

Austin, said Mrs. Shenstone, I am not sufficiently impressed by this. The workaday life is very necessary for people to get their living, and though I too feel tired sometimes

after teaching music all day, no light thing with stupid pupils, on the whole I am very thankful that it gives so much. When you have real sorrows with the hard reality, Austin, and the bitter pain from which there is no escape, and you must still brace yourself up to this workaday world—well, then perhaps it will be the better for you that you have the less time to indulge your griefs. This sentimentalism, Austin, is not manly, bolster it up ever so high, or gild it by what fine names you will. Your Byron, that you praise so much, I do not admire, and reading that flummery, or Goethe, perhaps, though I know very little about him, has sicklied your manly tone. It was enough for them to rave fantastic nonsense, after neglecting plainest duties, that others might have done and been silent.

And yet, said Austin after a pause and in another voice, it is not all that. The inner life is infinite; the thoughts of tender fancy and delicatest colouring that steal into our minds at times and wake it to a sweeter tune; the aspirations, purposings, we form

with glowing brain and throbbing heart—these that uphold the brave attempt, these are not merely shadows.

They had now reached the gate and she stood with her hand on the latch. He seemed for some moments lost in his own thoughts, his eyes fixed upon the stars where the Southern Cross was gleaming.

She looked up to his face so still, and her own restrained not now its sympathy. His eyes met hers, indeed so quickly had they fallen that he might perhaps have seen the look of sympathy, and he snatched a kiss at the tips of her fingers just as the gate was closing, and thereupon turned quickly and ran all the way home.

The next day the youngster called to say good-bye. He was going in the morning by the coach. She hoped he would do well at the University again (for they would all look forward to his success, and his own prospects too depended so much on that), advised him to go regularly to church, for reasons that she did not argue, said the Tarylvale air had freshened his cheeks again,

and urged him to be careful of his health, and finally with a quaint smile entreated him not to be "too sentimental." The blood came lightly to Austin's cheek; a wretched suspicion struck him that he was blushing. Furious with himself he became the more furiously red. Mrs. Shenstone was remarkably busy trimming the feathers of a bonnet that would *not* sit straight, and of course saw nothing of this. She smiled.

The door opened, and in danced the dainty nine-years-old, but catching sight of Austin checked her playful freedom. He caught her hands and tried to kiss her, but she drew herself up so haughtily that he desisted and laughed very much, speculating vaguely, At what age do they learn these tricks? And so smothering a sigh Austin said his good-byes hastily, and disappeared.

Happy as a schoolboy he had been, talking with old Sam Chubb and Jack Clancy, who were still mates, though with but "middling luck," happy with old Ben in their sporting expeditions. The old hill,

where he had watched the sun go down, and overlooked the wide extended panorama there below his own home with the lazy smoke ascending in the sky ; the streamlet, he traced its course and his eye was carried to the sombre deep blue light of the low range of hills, and, above, the sunset's crimson. These images passed through his mind in this retrospect as he lay awake that night, but in every picture seemed to be Mrs. Shenstone's graceful shape. Vague thoughts passed into dreams, the night vanished into morning, and fresh and alert he was awake again.

On the box seat of the coach to Gresham he travelled, a lively team of four-in-hand, the pride of old George himself. The morning was opening in its own glorious strength, of large splendour, generous, easy, full of cheer ; the wheels ran with a smooth rattle on the well-paved road—surely the cheeriest of all ways of journeying. Austin caught sight of Mrs. Shenstone's face through the window as they passed, and he saw her smile, though not very unkindly, when he

gave a sudden start, and bowed with great respect.

Ah ! times is not what they us'd, Master Brandt, had communicated old George, as he lit his pipe prior to a start. When we used to have the three coaches every mornin', and every one cram full. Jim Helter kept the Black Swan then ; that was the time. See that leader there, the roan, that belonged to Jim hisself. A real Panic. Look how he carries hisself, old and all as he is now. He liked a nice piece of horse-flesh, did Jim. That's the very horse Gordon wrote something about, they tells me.

Austin looked attentively at this interesting veteran, and old George was in a communicative mood.

Didn't Jim have a duel or something of the sort at the time he was married ?

Oh, bless your 'art, but you don't amind o' that surely. Why, it's most a twelve year back. Yes, you see Mrs. Breer kep' the Black Swan first, d'ye see ; a widow, trim little figure she was too, and after her old man died, an old mate of his,

Geordie Black, boarded there for a twelve-month. Well, Jim used to ride down every Saturday afternoon to see her, and by-and-bye he marries her. Well, then, up comes Geordie Black, and wants to take it out of Jim. And Jim, he says, "What for?" "Why, you've took away my sweetheart, ain't that enough?" says Geordie. And it comes out that all this time he had an eye on her hisself, but Lor' bless yer 'art, he never let on he was a coortin' of her!

Not bad! Well?

Well, they went into the bush with Davie MacIntyre backing Geordie, and Sam Chubb seconded Jim, and they had a bit of a scrap over it. But Jim could a' killed him, but he just played wi' him, and Lor' bless yer 'art they were the best of friends in the world in less'n a fortn't.

The Black Swan, famous in the early days, now alas! a ruin, was quickly passed.

Ah! said old George, a real good-hearted soul was Jim. A little too fond of turning up his little finger, they said. Well, perhaps he was and perhaps he warn't; that's just

as you like to take it, but the man don't live now that's better than Jim Helter was!

And so old George talked and the coach rattled gaily to its journey's end.

And here once more was the great city's whirl, scenes very different from these late idyllic ones with their pleasant memories and with the fragrance of the stories from the olden days.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE same company were to be found at Richmond House with the exception of Miss Lyddiard and Mr. Murray. Miss Stowbridge had, it appeared, in the settlement of an argument as to the pronounciation of a word, questioned the genuineness of the yellow hair. The precise grammatical bearing of her remark was not evident, and Miss Lyddiard's rejoinder that "Well, she was never a barmaid any way!" might possibly have seemed an *ignoratio elenchi*, but the subtleties of the female mind make a dull thing of logic.

Gills, who was at this period of his fortunes anxious to show that traces of the freshman had disappeared, explained that resultingly "The fat was in the fire." And

so Miss Lyddiard had made her exit, and behind the scenes it is not needful here to peep. Gillie himself was cheerful as usual, and accounted for Murray's absence by the fact that that celebrity had been invited, together with Schultless, to the country seat of a gentleman who had great possessions, to wit, vineyards. Their host supplied them with wine in a cask, which it would appear they poured into a bucket and drank with stoups, and were, as Gills phrased it, "consistently drunk" for nine days together.

On the occasion of their driving from a neighbouring station one night J. R. M. had used the whip with great effect, but had overlooked the small preliminary of taking the "ribbons" in his hands. The trap was smashed, and J. R. M.'s leg broken, but the humour of the thing was something immense.

In fact, as Gills related with much appreciation, J. R. M. had made money out of it, for he had received medical attention *gratis* from an old "pal" of his and had sent in a long bill to his mother. The house went on as usual; Gulpin still stole slyly

Letitia's bread at table and laughed very much when she discovered it; and Crossley was as fond of cards as ever, and never found it hard to make up a quiet rubber.

Mac worked steadily; Kithdale Brown was not in the least discouraged by defeat. "Use doth breed a habit in a man," Romanoff had said, and Joseph's pachydermatous mental habit served him as a sort of buffer to any manner of buffeting fate.

Gills was certainly no longer a freshman. He spoke in an off-hand way about examinations, played cards with more verve than ever, and with increasing frequency came home from social evenings in the liveliest of moods.

Austin had been so frequently assured of his delicate health that he had taken alarm. Brown told him that he had been once quite as fragile, but had sedulously practised gymnastics with as was evident the happiest results.

If the thing could be done Austin was not the man to let it drop. Joseph too urged him to this, but soon began to wonder if

there was such an inexplicable being on earth as the youngster, for he himself had no enthusiasms and no respect for what Austin called energy.

We have to get through life, haven't we? he once proposed to Romanoff. This position was difficult to assail. Well, then, we have to get through as easily as we can.

Austin trained for running in the mornings, played hand ball during the day, and practised gymnastics in the afternoon, with occasional rowing exercise to complete a programme. He became fairly expert at some of these accomplishments, and worked so indefatigably in his resolution to build up his physique that nothing but the toughest original constitution could have enabled him to endure such a strain. The row was always wound up with pots of half-and-half at the "Ancient Mariner"—a very necessary thing it was agreed all round when a "man's tongue was cleaving to his mouth."

Austin's zeal delighted his athletic friends. If a constitution could be so built up [he

would do it. Such was his inward commentary. He was filled with the old Greek notion of the *το καλον*.

We admire statues? he once questioned of Bob Kemp, the veteran of the University boat sheds. Bob admired Austin very much, though he had no belief he would ever make "a good man" of him on the river. He supposed we did. Really it struck him inwardly he had never before reflected on the matter, but Austin seemed to expect that answer.

Well, then, if this be excellent, continued the eager youngster, the accomplished form, the noble pose, is it not well to aim at this in our own persons, to strive after it at least? Nay, should not that be an outcome of the just appreciation of the art, or must art end in sentiment? Must we for ever sing Achilles and his deeds, and be content to live inglorious days? If it be culture to admire and know the beautiful in sculpture, painting, poetry, surely it is even a higher devotion to art, its service, to make these real, to impress them on the plastic

living form, to make them spontaneous in our minds and not a foreign ornament—extrinsic?

Oh! d— it, Austin, drink that half-and-half and let's finish the game. I never knew such a rummy fellow as you. You might have been in those trial eights if you only would keep your eyes in the boat. Missed, 92—27. I'll be out this break. Oh, by Jove! the two hazards. That's got him. Practice, Austin, old boy, practice. Talking metaphysics and playing billiards are two men's businesses.

Austin enjoyed his athletics, and as no man likes to be thought a fool even by one he soon dropped his singularities, and chuckled, if at all, in secret. They were all in the lusty spring—good health and spirits tide one over every mishap. It might have gone well with the youngster this year, for his studies were full of interest, and he managed to find a fair amount of time for them, and of the kind to bring about a plodding cast of thought. Unfortunately

for the solid Joseph's peace of mind he began to show great zeal for things political.

A man cannot live by bread alone, he said, nor yet on symbols of logic if the soul have hunger or thirst. And remarkably enough in a land where freedom might be thought to have reached its proper expansion the banner which he set above himself was, Democracy! Everything he did seemed to himself to have more or less connection with this aim, though the aim itself was by no means distinct,—his sympathy with the Bricklayers' assistants and the Foundrymen, his reverence for science, and even the *το καλον*; and so when Bob Kemp, or Crossley, or Kithdale Brown, or any of the others would not accompany him, he wandered about by himself amongst the people, and wasted a good deal of time not only with the daily newspapers, but to Joseph's considerable wrath with old stories of played-out adventures—the French Revolution, History of America, and what not. All this seemed to him to be in the pathway

of some great universal principle, the brotherhood of man to man, and so he rejoiced even in the life and death struggles, for strangely enough they seemed to be necessary, and seemed obscurely to hold forth a certain doctrine of a fair field and no favour, the shattering of false gods, the pulling down of fetiches, and the casting of that *débris* into the sea. And so he looked candidly into the faces of men, and grappled with as much as came across his own observation or into his reading, and endeavoured to see into the very heart of things that were necessary to him to explore.

That emotional expansion that others found in the faith of religions that he wondered at, he seemed impelled, though only half-consciously, to find in the works that lay about his feet.

My comrade,
For you to share with me two greatnesses, and a third
one rising inclusive and more resplendent,
The greatness of Love and Democracy, and the greatness
of Religion.

CHAPTER XV.

AUSTIN brushed his hat, and went to see his godmother, Mrs. Charlwood. She came to the door on hearing him announced and took him warmly by the hand. There was a natural ease of kindness in her style that won the youngster's heart at once.

She led the way into her little parlour, where she was taking tea all by herself, and looked at him very deliberately, saying, smilingly —

I want to see what my little godchild is like. Didn't you know that? Oh, you'll do very well. Give me a kiss, boy.

Austin had a very vague notion of what a godmother really was, and speculated that this possibly came within her sphere, and so,

bending his head, permitted himself to receive an affectionate buss.

Ah, that's a good boy. Your mother's a very lucky woman. H'm. But come, now, I'll pour out your tea.

And they were soon engaged in a very confidential conversation.

Mrs. Charlwood was then about five-and-forty years of age, still good-looking undoubtedly, with the beautiful white teeth, and all her mellow tones, the figure a little inclined to *embonpoint*, but still by universal consent that of a very fine woman. She was a devoted church-goer. She told him this herself, and, as he even then discovered, a certain tinge of particular correctness was known to temper all her thoughts. Her hair was of a rich warm chestnut, plentifully flecked with white, but without giving her the appearance of age.

She made many particular inquiries about Tarylvalde, about Austin's studies, his companions, gave him some good advice, and asked him to come out every Sunday, for that was her "At Home."

The foolish youngster's pulse beat high at the thoughts of meeting a room full of people. He made his obeisance with great dignity, and, as Mrs. Charlwood observed with a smile, seated himself composedly near Miss Willoughby, the reigning beauty of the ball-rooms, and relapsed into deep thought. She, to be sure, was being flattered almost to her heart's content by young Simpmore who sat on the other side.

Music and singing was the main business of the evening, and it was Mrs. Charlwood's happy art to bring the couples or groups together most likely to be mutually agreeable.

Presently she came and sat by her god-child. Dr. Charlwood was again absent, she said, and as Austin was now one of the family he must take the head of the table.

How do you like Miss Willoughby ?

That young lady had evidently a complete repertoire of graces. She was just then accompanying herself to an operatic air on the piano.

She seems pretty.

Seems pretty ! She's the famous beauty, don't you know, Miss Willoughby ?

Ah !

And she learnt her music from Madam Schumann too.

She certainly has good execution, said Austin.

He thought this safe, for her fingers were flying over the boards at what he thought must be an unprecedented rate, and at times her dainty hands crossed one another in a most perplexing way.

Oh, thank you ! interrupted the conversation all round, and with studied elegance she rose and elaborately resumed her seat.

Well, who does then please my serious godchild ? Who does seem, I suppose, interesting enough ?

I rather like that lady's face.

The girl in white ?

No ! the other beyond, turning over the leaves of a book.

Oh, Mrs. Neville, to be sure. I'll ask her to play, and you'll hear something worth listening to.

Mrs. Neville at that moment looked up, and Mrs. Charlwood going forward to her took her hands.

Yes, you were right, she said, as though in answer to her look, we were talking about you, and my little godchild deigns to think you nice-looking.

She glanced suddenly, and their eyes met with light collision. Her face had been the first his eyes rested on.

How like Mrs. Shenstone, he thought, though this was mere delusion, and their eyes had been encountering all the time.

Mrs. Neville played without pretence, but grace was her natural movement. Smiling she had risen, and his eyes had followed her across the room. Of middle height, and figure slight, perhaps, there was a supple ease in movement and repose, and the youngster's head moved in rhythmic sway in watching her. She played a simple plaintive air.

He closed his eyes, and visions of Taryl-vale, of half-forgotten scenes, rose up within. The old hill on which he had so often sat

and the setting sun were mingled in his thoughts, his home then, and Mrs. Shenstone too, and the notes were in their sweetness half forgotten.

Mrs. Neville then accompanied Mrs. Wilton, a lady of about forty, and confidential friend of Mrs. Charlwood, healthy and happy-looking, who sang "Twickenham Ferry" wonderfully well, smiled, took her seat, and seemed to forget all about it.

At supper Austin's eyes were continually wandering towards Mrs. Neville. She was then, perhaps, six-and-twenty years of age, blooming with health, but, though easy, somewhat subdued, it seemed, and thoughtful. Her hair of a rich brown was done up in something of a classic coil. Not classical the features, though; the air of patience softened down what might have been a piquant style: full lips but firm, the expression that of a good woman, and underneath dark eyebrows shone blue eyes. Blue were they, or violet? Colour was lost in their glowing light.

The conversation turned on ladies' dress.

Mrs. Burton, a lady who, to be sure, was not very attractive in her personal appearance, spoke with great asperity against her sex and their frivolities, which, she averred, were the real stumbling blocks to the intellectual advancement that the nineteenth century seemed to demand.

So much trouble given to mere external show and vanities of that sort, she said, and looked severely at Mrs. Neville. Pity some of them have not something better to do to improve their minds and mind their house; that would be better, I think.

Austin sat somewhat easily amused. He was half-intoxicated, not with wine, for he had drunk none; but it was a more subtle draught, as in that full room, with the odour of luxury in the air, he looked across the table to meet the intermittent sparklings of Mrs. Neville's deep eyes. Yes, she was graceful, and her head was poised on a column more beautiful than anything he had yet beheld in classic marble.

Have you seen, he said, that picture of Cormon's — the return of the warriors

from Salamis and the dancing of the maidens welcoming them back? The waters of the blue sea, too, seem to be dancing, lightly tossed, and the pebbles of the shore are all sparkling, and the tall shrubs nod in the breeze. The maidens are dancing splendidly—bright eyes, red cheeks, blue bodices, the waving of orange and purple scarves, sashes, cinctures, the kirtles, or kilts, cerise, magenta, and green, the impeccable white or faint flush of a vestment ecru. Everyone laughed, and he continued, Beauty, not merely of feature, but expression, and movement, and soul. By Jupiter, yes, that is a victory!

The worst of victories, then—the triumph of vanity.

Pooh! all women are vain.

What! cried the ladies in chorus.

Yes. It's the breath of their nostrils. Others not so vain, but still vain, and he looked so sincere and withal so guileless, and waved his hand with such a peculiar gesture, that Mrs. Charlwood and all the others laughed in amusement.

Thereupon Mrs. Neville agreed that women may be vain, although it was very rude to have said so, but that men were more vain, that fatuous, ridiculous, ungraceful men were vain, and rude men and crude men egregiously vain. They laughed, and a general consensus of opinion followed that certainly all mankind were vain.

Mrs. Roberts quoted from Sheridan that vanity was a greater motive than love or ambition. Mrs. Charlwood confessed, in very charming style, that she too was vain, and related to the great delight of all some very vain, but very amiable, things she'd done. It transpired that she had once been accustomed to run upstairs to get a good colour when she entered the room, and that she was fastidious even now in the fit of her gloves. Austin glanced at her hands. They were white and of beautiful shape.

Then followed a string of confessions all round the table of vain things that had severally been done, and finally, in good humour, the company parted rather late at night.

Be sure and come next Sunday, said Mrs. Charlwood. Now, Austin, it's no harm for your godmother to give you a kiss.

The next Sunday Dr. Charlwood himself was there—surely one of the most genial individuals in the world. He appeared to be about sixty, tall, well-made, and straight, and with a dexterous arrangement of the hair, which made up to some extent for the actual deficiencies of nature. But looking into his bluff hearty countenance, and feeling his warmth of manner, and remembering the confessions of last Sunday, one could not regard this very severely. The hostess herself came often and sat by her godchild and bestowed on him absolute confidence.

And who is the fair lady talking to Dr. Charlwood?

She looked up quickly.

Oh! that is Mrs. Barbour. Doll-face—she irritates me. See how she is giggling now.

And what are her particular accomplishments?

Oh! she sings a little. I will ask her,

and going forward, with that manner all her own, forgetting her irritations at once, she led the doll-faced Mrs. Barbour to the piano to sing the most pretty of ditties.

And so she used to go from one to another bestowing a smile on everyone but her husband, and, further, with great tact, she seemed to dispense her kindness principally upon those whom the doctor was inclined to neglect, and to trouble little about those whom he was perfectly willing to amuse.

At the suppers the doctor was at his best and was very popular with the company. This was not to be wondered at, for it was his disposition to make all around him happy. He had that very evening asked Mrs. Brownlow, the mother of a bevy of grown-up daughters, to favour him with that song of hers he had heard once on some particular unforgettable day.

“Oh! dove, with the white, white breast,” it runs, he said, and hummed a bar or two.

Oh, doctor, let some of the younger ones try. I’m getting too old, you know, now for that sort of thing.

Since when! Madam, may I ask? cried the doctor—or, rather, “Mah ah ask” he pronounced it. Your amiability will keep you ever young, and he bowed with all the grace of a master of deportment.

The “Dove with the white, white breast” was given, of course, to great applause.

Mrs. Brownlow was heard subsequently to declare that the doctor’s manner had a refinement one felt without being able to say where, that indefinable *Je ne sais quoi* that makes the perfect gentleman.

And if refined he could be hearty too and was equally a favourite with the men. Always in humour, always ready to keep the ball rolling, never refusing his turn, such was the host. Indeed, after the ladies had retired he waxed happier still, and over, not the walnuts and the wine, but the whisky and cigars, it was the doctor who used to bring down the house in roars of laughter with those stories of his—remembered, no doubt, from his student days. In fact there were few men who had been called rare good fellows more often than the doctor.

CHAPTER XVI.

AUSTIN could not help admiring Mrs. Neville, but that admiration was innocent, purely æsthetic. He had become distant, more sensitive, since the first night.

And here was another night, beautifully clear.

Mrs. Neville elected to walk.

And Austin will be a doughty escort, said Mrs. Charlwood. She touched his smooth cheek. You may call him Austin, too, for my little godson is but a child yet.

The child looked out of doors into the free open world of the night, and longings, as though in a dim sleep half waking, were throbbing in his breast.

* * * * *

Well, then, Austin, said Mrs. Neville, with

her head down, was it too much to have risen and walked across the room to speak to me?

The youngster laughed.

No, but then I heard your music, and that you know spoke very eloquently.

Oh, do you know, Austin, I never can play music there. I never can lose myself in the music itself. The people—well, there's no inspiration about them. It takes the poetry out of one. I feel faint and spiritless. My happiest moments are when I'm alone.

Mine, too, said Austin.

Here was sympathy.

How tedious, she continued, this superficial life so often seems to me. Fashionable courtesies and formal calls and sickly compliments, and this from day to day until it runs away with months and years. Why, I am already twenty-six, and how far does one year advance me before the last? And what is there in this to aim at? How old are you?

I, let me see; seventeen—nearly eighteen. She smiled.

Well, you are, compared with me, really only a boy yet, as Mrs. Charlwood said, and you will not mind me calling you Austin. Oh, if I had all my life over again, and could see all that I see now. I'm sure your thoughts are nobler than those of others I see about. Set your ambitions high and pure, and do not waver. You have your life before you. Have you not ?

There was a sudden fervour in her words.
Yes.

Well, then, we will talk about these things more when we know each other better, and you can confide in me. I feel that I can talk freely to you, for you can understand the aspirations one feels to live—to aim higher. I often think of giving up this tiresome rout for ever—to improve my mind with reading and study and music, and the conversation of a few friends only. But I could not gain even that wish, and intermingling with people even that one does not care about takes away the disposal of one's own time. And—and I do not find anywhere a spur.

He was thoughtful.

But that will come itself from books. We select our own company, and that the best of all. What treasures lie about our feet while we fret our souls for trinkets. How great a privilege that mere faculty of reading is, Great Heavens! We have at once all the wealth of science given to our hands, and the impulse of the noblest thoughts to send us on.

They walked along in silence.

Their eyes met again, and she continued —

Oh, how beautiful might even this world become if we all strove for something higher than ourselves. Truth to say, it is dreary enough sometimes, and if I had not faith in another, I—yes, yes, I must never lose that faith. . . . Mrs. Charlwood has already told me how clever you were, and how much you have read.

I! No, I have scarcely even broken ground. My ignorance weighs on me. I feel it like Christian felt his pack of sins. Yes, yes, I must work harder.

But, then, he added, it is not by read-

ing merely that we gain knowledge ; and I feel a sort of burning inside me that makes me wander out and try to see things for myself and at first hand. I'm villainously fond of knocking about and talking to all sorts of people.

Very well, then. I'm glad to have had this talk with you. We will talk of books, and read and study and improve, and I will play you music when the others are not there. Are you fond of music ?

No—that is, I don't understand it except when it is very simple.

Oh, well, then, that too is good. I will educate you in music—for that is a wonderful thing in itself—and then I shall not feel so foolish when you talk to me of all that you have learnt.

She smiled with a happy confidence as she gave him her hand. He felt how good she was and in that forgot her beauty, bowed with some grace, and soon after leaving her ran lightly homeward.

And so it came about. And the end of their week was Sunday, and the walk in the

beautiful evening was always the best of it all.

This was very innocent, and their eyes were happy when they met, and the pressure of hands sincere.

He told her of the old Greek philosophers and the classic greatness of their lives. She encouraged him in noble thoughts.

He told her of his father's series, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, and she was amused; but when he told her of his own despairs, rejections, she placed her fingers to her lips and spoke with serious tone —

Austin, that is sacred to me. Be silent. We may hereafter talk of it—not just yet. And you will be won round too. Austin, it is sacred to me.

She could understand everything else—his studies, athletics, *το καλον*, democracy! She was keen and delightful. She could plod, she could plunge into thought, or dance with the green kirtles of Cormon. And then he used to describe Tarylvale, and she was a very school-girl in her happiness and her love of fresh sweet pleasures.

And she told him of her music and the solace it was to her, and strove to enlighten the obstinacy of the darkness that beset him. She took up the study of German again, and resolutely set to work on "The Wealth of Nations," as though searching for guidance.

He told her one evening that he meditated giving up his course.

Why, Austin? But I will hear. Tell me your reasons then—all.

All? No! An elaborate argument to a woman is like a fishing-net to a whale; it wants a harpoon.

Austin, is that fair?

Well, perhaps not to all, he said, laughing. But I will avoid metaphysics, and trudge nearer earth. I know how great that saying was of Telford's, "*Damn politics, let's talk of lime.*" But—look at the statue of Jason, Achilles, Phœbus Apollo, or look at the beautiful Greek maidens dancing, as we saw in the picture, bright eyes, glowing cheeks, by the shore of the sea. Whither? What is the upshot, the great secret of all? Art can make no reply to all that baffles

the painful thought. And what if, instead of Apollo, we have Palladio's Bridge over the Arno, the Pantheon, or Westminster Abbey? Again, an art, working with delicate tools. Science gives us the formula. Within that limit we work. The art tells us nothing beyond. But—well—the years glide away. I would look back and see, to descend to the concrete again—roads laid out, railways, communications between men, bridges made. True, that is great. A few hundred pounds gained, were I lucky; the respect, say, of a small circle of friends —

And a good wife to love you, and a band of happy children, Austin, she said.

Then to die and have a fair-sized funeral, and ten lines of an obituary notice! Would I be satisfied with that?

Well, but how many lines would satisfy you, Austin? Would twenty or twenty-five?

Now, but seriously, without referring so much to these arithmetical measurements of fame—even were I unselfish—might I not say, has this been the best use to which I

could have given my life? I feel within me powers which such a life would atrophy, an enthusiasm—I can say this to you—which does not find its scope. Ah! the harvest is plenteous.

You have never rowed in an eight-oared boat, he said, laughing. It is a delightful feeling to pull a good steady stroke all together, or to try to, anyhow; or to go to a big public meeting and feel yourself yelling like mad with about a thousand others. It doesn't seem to matter very much what you are yelling, but that gives you some idea of co-operation. And then to think of working out a great idea with others, of making our own country a great nation. Yes, to become absorbed in that.

They walked a long time in silence.

Well, said she, at length, you would be, in short, a politician.

Yes, by character and inclination too.

And ambition, Austin?

Well! Ah, when I think of those who have gone before me—great men who have done good work in their day—and when I

feel that we approach a shore—a something yet unknown—a new day—the Republic—these feelings bubble up, swim round me, overwhelm me.

I know, Austin. But be practical again. You are very young, and at least you must wait many years. Therefore why does this interfere with your engineering course?

I have thought of all that, said he. I have the patience to wait; but I have something better than that too—I have the energy to work. This ambition will demand its hard service. I must prepare myself, accomplish myself as far as I can. Yes, I must work. For one thing, I must work at law.

Good, Austin; but in the meantime finish your engineering course. It will be very helpful to you even in the life you have sketched out, and for other reasons too. For instance, if anything should happen meanwhile.

Yes, yes; but I will be able to work steadier now—now that I have told you. That you approve too makes me even at this moment feel sure. If you had not though,

and he looked at her with much seriousness, it would not have changed my plans one little bit.

They both laughed.

Very well, Austin, she said as they parted, even that pleases me. "To thine own self be true."

CHAPTER XVII.

SOMETIMES Mr. Neville himself would join the party for half-an-hour or an hour ; not often, for he was a “ busy man.”

His style was not precisely what one would have anticipated from *her* tastes. He was a man of about fifty years of age, not tall, but thick-set, stout, coarse, and not healthy-looking. He had a large jaw, a face of considerable power, heavy, dogged-looking. One might suspect that he drank. His voice was loud and harsh, but his manner though it did not seem very natural was affable enough.

He looked what he was—a man who had made and still would make his way in politics. By profession he was a barrister but with no large practice. He had, how-

ever, acquired wealth by successful business ventures, and these he still pursued. Sometimes he talked to the youngster politics at most particular length, but listened with no patience to Austin's lines of argument. He was extremely amused at Austin's determination to make a figure in the political world and said jocosely that he hoped to be present at his *début*. There was nothing to fire one in Mr. Neville's principles but much to be learnt from his knowledge. He was a man of affairs. When rebuffed, which was not unusual, Austin took counsel from Diogenes' "Strike me but teach me." He surmised too that Mr. Neville must have many good qualities which were not apparent on the surface to have won so good a wife and to have acquired his well-known popularity.

Mr. Neville and the doctor were as good friends as Mrs. Neville and Mrs. Charlwood, and so as week after week slipped by the occasions of seeing Mrs. Neville, the lending of books, the reading, the conversation, singing and music, easily became more and more frequent, though always discreet.

Austin, come with me till I arrange my supper room. Now tell me where all the people ought to sit.

You can manage that yourself, he said, laughing. What an innocent way you had of bringing Trafford and Miss Willoughby together, and no one could guess your little premeditations.

You are very observant. Where were you sitting, then, that you had so much leisure for other people's business?

I? Let me see. Ah, yes, I was sitting next to Mrs. Neville then.

Ah, yes; are you really sure of that now, Austin? How you remember the most careless things; and how did she look to-night?

Not badly.

Not badly? No, even well! She is brilliant. I always thought her handsome, but never so much so as to-night. Now, Austin, boy, take care. What with attractions and repulsions—Austin! Oh, what am I saying!

Ha! cried Austin, a light suddenly dawn-

ing, I think, however, I am in no danger. I see her once a week in this room full of people, escort her home, that's a duty, and forsooth you warn me. She is handsome, but she is good too, that is better. You are very prudent.

Good, Austin. You are improving. The air in Dudley is not so sweet and pure as Tarylvale. It is very sweet there, is it not?

Her hand rested lightly on the table as she stood with head half averted. A look of wonderful tenderness came into her face, then a flush and a knitting of brows.

But she is unhappy. Does he not treat her well?

No, she cried, vehemently, wherever did you find a man that did, that married one too good for him, whose nature was not coarse and sordid like his own? Ach! it is vile. She, perhaps, gentle, sensitive—a loving word, a touch of a kind hand, more to her than all his gifts, show, ostentation; he selfish, ignoble. He has this pretty piece of furniture forsooth, and for the rest what

are a woman's feelings—the smile on a face—a face of maudlin tears! No, no; it's the way of the world, Austin, she said, with a laugh. Here, pour me out a little wine. There, Austin, in the tumbler. Now, you rogue, I did not say so much. She drank it eagerly nevertheless. Her eyes sparkled and her cheeks glowed more warmly than before. Now let me see, said she, reflectively, well, if she will, she will! she muttered, that's not my business. Now, Austin, I think I will keep you next to me at the head of the table. William will be at the other. Who was it said that the number at table should range from that of the Graces to that of the Muses?

Kant, the German philosopher.

Wrong.

And now I recollect reading that Kant quoted it from Chesterfield.

Did he then? But nevertheless, said Mrs. Charlwood, somewhat after the manner of J. R. M. and his note-book, you'll find it in one of the old Latin authors, Statius, I think, or Petronius. We have here to-night

the number of the apostles, the lucky number, as Sadi says in Schiller's "Wallenstein."

Have you read Schiller, too? Austin inquired, in great admiration.

Oh, yes, she replied, carelessly, one is expected to know a little of these things of course.

And do you think, exclaimed Austin, with great earnestness, that Goethe is right, that poetry is greater as it grows more objective?

What? Ah! yes; but we will speak about that another time. Who was William talking with? Harcourt. Yes, and about that ship syndicate. Good! Now Mrs. Wilton here, an attractive young widow, Austin, and well off too. We'll put Captain Brown next to her. Here Mrs. Ingram and her husband, and here Miss Willoughby and Trafford, eh, Austin? as she touched him with her finger on the cheek. And here old Jenkin, and then Mrs. Neville. Well, we'll have her near us, Austin. You will not be afraid. That wine you offered me has put me in the best of spirits. It tasted

better from your hands. Austin, you are really fortunate.

How so? said Austin. How so?

You have youth and beauty. Favours chase you. Where other mortals have to play the entertainer, you gain good will with the utmost gravity in the world, and take it as a matter of course.

H'm! said Austin, seriously. And what about my course? That demands work. Besides, it is not a good thing to tell me that.

Ah! my grave young stoic. How old are you, Austin?

Eighteen. That is nearly.

Really! A dangerous age, boy! Have nothing to do with ladies, Austin. Frivolous ones, I mean! Eighteen! that is nearly! Austin, be sage.

Austin drew himself up.

Am I then such a tyro?

She laughed.

Austin, bring me my bracelet, quick, it is in my boudoir. This time she drank from the bottle deeply. Her cheeks flushed; her eyes sweltered with feelings all un-

ashamed. Let her try the test, too, she muttered. Ah! that's a good boy. Now, Austin, whisper. She bent a little forward, standing on tiptoe, all trembling, with her hand upon his shoulder. Would you blush at a white petticoat, Austin, the flash of a garment ecru? And she touched his cheek, then pushed him away, and laughed at her gentle raillery. I ought to be ashamed of putting such thoughts into your head, but come, let us go to the good people now.

* * * * *

The evening passed over very pleasantly. Mrs. Charlwood had been altogether at her best as hostess, and had well deserved the golden opinions for her tact and graceful courtesy. She had endured the prosings of old Jenkins about his garden and the endless troubles he had had with caterpillars. She had listened to a long and particular account from young Trafford of a boat race he ought to have won if No. 3 (and all because he wouldn't keep his eyes—after he had told him expressly—in the boat, and he had said just as they were paddling down to the start

he would ; he would not have minded if it had been Bow, for Bow wasn't used to the long slides yet and couldn't get away with his hand for want of ruler practice) had not unshipped his oar. She had agreed with Mrs. Ingram that the Church was really in a very bad state, that the signs of the times certainly seemed to betoken the second coming of the Lord, that there were wars and rumours of wars everywhere, and those dreadful earthquakes meant something, and that what was really wanted was more earnestness in the preachers. And so she went the whole round, smiling always. It was a pleasure to see her face, her guests said, so happy.

The night was clear and fine. Only Austin and Mrs. Neville were left.

Mrs. Charlwood asked him to take wine, for it was chilly, she said.

He refused.

But meanwhile she had poured it out and held it up to him.

Drink !

No, said he, laughing, I have no head,

and have already taken a glass of wine at supper.

Don't talk like a silly little fool. Eighteen ! boy,—am I such a tyro ? Here, pledge me then ; you won't refuse that, and she poured out another for herself, and held it daintily aloft.

Oh for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim
And purple-stained mouth.

That's it to perfection, is it not ? Ah ! that's right.

The doctor was standing talking to Mrs. Neville at the door. Very handsome she looked in that fur cape, thought Austin, and her eyes were shining like stars.

Mrs. Charlwood called him back.

Now, Austin, remember my warning. I am afraid you have already fluttered her. Good-bye.

They talked but little on the way home. Austin's manner was restrained ; she seemed very thoughtful.

They reached her home ; he held out his hand in silence.

She had taken off her glove, and when they met the hands retained the clasp. Austin looked at her earnestly, and she turned away her head.

Was she hurt? He hesitated.

My handkerchief, she said, and her cheeks began to mantle.

Oh, pardon.

He kissed the handkerchief, laughing.

Now, now! and her breath was drawn deep, and she looked down and her fingers played with the handkerchief. But we'll be friends now? and she held out her hand again. The soft hand and graceful wrist bent to his lips. He kissed the warm surface. Their eyes met; a quick clasp of the hands, and his blood made a leap. A blow seemed to have rung on his breast—a wild, sudden bewilderment, as of a call to some strange drama to be played out in his life.

When they met again the natural, confident happiness was gone; in its stead, resistance. This with a desperate attraction. They shunned each other. They were antagonists. It was for life and for death, but there was

an irresistible delirium in contest, felt now even before they were conscious of struggle. He danced with her, at her house, as partner. It was the sensuous waltz. The music rose with its "voluptuous swell," passionate, then yearning. They glided, she floated, borne by his arm, both down a full flowing river. The lamps were glowing with magic, then amidst the bubbling waves, then amidst the thronging of dancers—a gorgeous, unreal panorama. The music had ceased. He strode into the cool. He scorned, he defied those invisible powers that would seek to triumph over—lay waste his life.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MR. NEVILLE'S utterances on laws and the making of laws, the government of a great people, could not fail to be interesting. That gentleman had a good grip of public affairs, and an encyclopædic command of details. Also he had a great knowledge of men, it was said. Sadly enough, he seemed to have acquired this reputation by distrusting them all.

He was reckoned a good public speaker, but he was accustomed, not only metaphorically, but actually, to put out his tongue at the good people the moment he had retired from the platform, where he had been obliged, as he called it, to "butter them." A coarse man, in fact, one who liked coarse things of language and of tastes. His manners could

be elaborate though, for he practised assiduity in small attentions, almost like a drill. Strong men might fear him, tender women admired him.

Mr. Neville had been a minister of the Crown. Organization ! discipline ! despatch ! were his watchwords. He could grip the sledgehammer in a style to have delighted Carlyle himself, "till the knuckles were white."

Get your *aim* well in view, he said to Austin, then everything in your way—crush it down.

Mr. Neville's aim might be summed up in one word—Neville. That satisfied, he was judicial. Equity is an intellectual sense. He liked to glove the iron hand, for he was "out and out practical," and wheedling he found much better than the *ad captandum* "knuckles white."

Marc Antony's oration was Mr. Neville's favourite and great exemplar. He talked much of Shakespeare, and with great self-satisfaction. It was delightful to hear him at his own table discoursing with loud voice,

the dull bulk of his presence giving weight to his sentences, as with heavy hand he laid down the law.

I say, and I repeat, that Shakespeare knew the human heart! You may talk about Carlyle and Emerson and Browning and what not, but the Swan of Avon will reign as the prince of dramatists, the brief chronicler of the time, the great recorder of the race, the—the—the genius on his throne.

There's Wall, he once instanced to Austin, in explaining "finesse." A good fellow, a man you can depend on, works like a tiger in his department, plumes himself on the care of the public interest,—and offends all the people he has anything to do with.

How's that?

I'll tell you. A deputation, we'll say, comes to Wall from Mud-flat; they want a railway there. Well, Wall has everything prepared before—figures, statistics, plans, estimates, everything; he has looked into the business. Yes, their claim is a good one. They are ushered in to him, and the boss man begins to talk away. 'Stop, that will do,' says

Wall, and cuts him short, 'I have had the information prepared.' He settles it; they'll have what they want, and as soon as he can manage it. It's no use asking for any more; he'll do the best he can. Snubs them, lets them go. Well, he has given them all they wanted, and made an enemy of every man in the deputation. They didn't care so much about the railway for a year or two, but if they had made long speeches, and had it all reported in the local *'Tiser*, and had shaken hands, all right, Wall would have been the man in the back parlour of the local pubs for the next twelve months.

Yes, said Austin laughing, I heard the Mayor of our little village describing his interview with yourself when you were Minister of Railways. "Well," after relating the business from the start in the morning from Tarylvalle up to the interview, "Neville," very familiar, "Neville wanted to see some papers, and as he had them in his own room he said to us, come along; so we walked with him along the passage. I was on the right and Donaldson on the left, and Baker

at the other side. Well, we walked along, you know, talking it all over, and when Neville got to his room he said, 'It's rather dark; we'd better light up.' And he felt in his waistcoat pocket for a match, but couldn't find one. I don't think he smokes; and then he turned to me and he says, 'Have you got a lucifer about you, Dawson?' Well, it happened that very day I left mine behind, changing my trousers, just as luck would have it, and so I turned to Donaldson."

I remember the deputation, said Mr. Neville laughing; they had, as you know yourself, not the shadow of a claim. Taryl-vale has gone to the dogs now, but I let them ramble and talk away till they were dry, and then I showed them a mass of papers that simply took their breath away, and I put it to them that they would see *themselves* that the finances of the country would not at present bear the strain, and, *if I might be guided by their judgment*, we would be agreed that certain other claims were for the present very pressing. I got hold of their names, too, pat, and that's a

thing Wall never does. Well, I didn't give them anything they wanted, but they buttered me with compliments as they marched out all together.

What a hoarse loud voice my husband has, Mrs. Neville had once said to Austin. Is it not strange that so small a thing as that should irritate one? But then a voice always forces itself so on notice.

Oh! said Austin, probably from public speaking.

I don't much like the idea of changing one's profession, said Mr. Neville to Austin on another occasion; let the shoemaker stick to his last, I always say.

It has not always been so, said Austin; one might easily, being uninformed, adopt a wrong course. It would be obstinacy, not firmness, to continue. The best course is not the most direct. A lightning flash is not straight.

Well, said Mr. Neville, with a very commendable impatience of this kind of metaphor, or glitter, or froth, let us come to the point. Now, suppose all your ships

come home, what then? Suppose I play the devil's advocate? I'd say I don't want to discourage you, for I believe you have some stuff in you, but I think you'll find yourself stranded half-way. Your head is full of silly notions. I can understand a man having a desire to travel, that expands his ideas; I can understand a man wishing to learn a language; he meets people in company and that gives him a pull all round—but when one man doesn't know what he's talking about, and tries to persuade another that doesn't understand his language, that's metaphysics; and when a man goes about with long hair talking twaddle for school girls, or anybody else that will listen to him, that's poetry!

Well, there's Shakespeare, said Austin.

Ah! well, ah! but he's a dramatist.

Well, said Austin, laughing, I esteem your opinions very much. Meanwhile, you're a lover of music, a patron in fact?

Yes; there's something in music that one can feel. It's a pleasure—a refined pleasure.

And you have some very nice paintings

in your house? That one of Longstaff and that beautiful Ruth.

Yes, that's something to look at. It tells a story, and it's one of the fine arts.

Even in that picture of Ruth you have the vague sense of her loneliness, her undefined yearnings, as we might have stood and looked at her in silence.

What are you driving at!

Well, we have something to look at in every face we pass in the street. But there are thoughts too delicate, too subtle, too complex for looks. This is the intellectual part, which cannot be represented on canvas, the whole chain of circumstance with its real pictures stretching out at every stage, extending into all the vistas that make up a life. There is imagination's play. My pictures of the fancy stand out as vividly, grander, more delicate than those on painted canvas—more various, that's the rub! They succeed each other. They are all like reality. Poetry.

H'm. Mr. Neville was rather sleepy that evening. He had drunk a good deal of wine.

It was probably this that made him inclined to be good-natured. His eyes were closed, and his hands folded across his stomach.

And metaphysics, continued the youngster, gives us the insight into the whole *scheme* of human thought. It ought to be into the whole *scheme of human life*; trains at the same time too our intellects, while teaching us to observe the processes in which our minds set to work.

I thought so, said Mr. Neville, waking up. I asked you about your ships coming home, and you have been stranded half-way, as I told you, in this wishy-washy nonsense.

H'm. You would not rise up and go to that door unless you had some motive, eh?

No. He looked very comfortable just then.

No. And you wouldn't sit for hours over piles of business papers, when you might be taking your siesta on the balcony, without some strong inducement.

There's money in that, Austin. Put money in your purse! That's solid. Your sentiment is all very well for a boy of

eighteen. Wait till you are forty, and you'd rather have a fat balance at your bankers than all the poetry in Christendom or out of it. I was sentimental myself at your age. Not such a fool, though, Austin, as you!

Well, money, continued the pertinacious Austin, that's tangible at any rate, but money's only a medium of exchange. Therefore that is only valuable for what we purchase with it. Therefore there must be some ulterior motive. What is that? What can you do with your money?

Get your money, Austin, and you'll find all these questions easily answered. What can you do with money? Ha! ha! and he really seemed very amused. Hi, riddle de riddle de dee! What can you do with your money? Ha! ha! I like talking with you now and then, Austin.

Well, but come to the point! If you buy pictures you're coming back to sentiment, and by your own confession I beat you there. Of course, in all this there's the little point of vanity. Money makes the splendour that dazzles the eyes of the mob. H'm, then

ambition. Now, wouldn't you like to be Premier ?

Eh ? what ?

Ha ! ha ! You're hard bit ! Would you not like to be Premier ?

Well, every man likes to get on. The whole business of life consists in besting your neighbour, or else he'll best you, and so it becomes a religious duty to look out for No. 1.

Ha ! cried Austin, suddenly, at this King Charles' head. Religion. Yes, that's another. Your views don't tally. You pile up money, and yet you are one of the strongest supporters of the Church ; and with no return you give away to it £200 a year and have a pillar with inscription erected—

Enough of that subject. If I were your father I'd talk to you in a way that would surprise you.

H'm, said Austin, these matter-of-fact men, these realists, these men of common sense, these men of roast beef and plum pudding, these good sound practical men are fallible ; drenched in follies, superstitions, and vulgar

sentiment. . . . And then, of course, there are fine wines and costly dishes—ah, the feasts of luxury, *paté de foie gras*? Green turtle fat and the rich old crusty port?

Yes.

And carriages to loll in, and spanking greys?

Yes.

And fine women—*well groomed*, don't they call them in the Society newspapers?

Yes, money will buy anything in this world. And as for the good things it provides—well, take what you get and don't lose a chance.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE moth wheels his dazed flight into the fire.

Playing with forbidden things soon leaves the bitter sting.

The thoughts are toned with sadness that come to us as we look back on the years that are gone, and serene for the moment from the hot passions and irritant desires that impel our fretful lives view from afar the stream of tendencies and acts, and, with the power of gathered knowledge, watch the play of human life.

Mrs. Neville continually found new delight in Austin's company. His mind spurred hers on. He formed while seeming to pursue her plastic feelings, himself, to be sure,

much at sea. He would soon begin to be resisted—a pretty play, a mimic battle would be fought, and leave him unmolested. A pretty play—no evil could come to him—what was there? . . . No.

She, midst her tears, her frantic struggles, and the turmoil of conflicting feelings, could not hide it from herself that her resolution, her reserve, was melted at his touch.

* * * * *

That particular evening was very fine—soft, clear, and still. Some of the company had gone out to sit under the verandah, and there entertained by Mrs. Charlwood were passing the time so agreeably that the world might well seem a place where strawberries were always growing.

The windows were up and the voices could be heard outside, and now and again an appreciative “thank you” showed that the music too came distinct enough to add a charm to their siesta. Austin and Mrs. Neville were soon left alone in the drawing-room, the youngster sitting near the piano very quietly, and she had glanced at him

two or three times without his having observed it. A piece of Schubert's it was she was playing, and when she had finished he rose.

Beautiful, indeed, he said ; you know I am such a barbarian, in spite of your patience, but sitting here, now, the notes struck into me very wonderfully. It was like the awakening of a new sense, some hitherto undiscovered well of knowledge or of feeling, that seemed to hold an infinite delight.

It was but a simple piece, Austin ; still, very beautiful. I played too better now than ever I have done before. When the room is full I feel that the music is forced out of me ; I play without heart. But, come let us join them nevertheless. Why have we seen you so seldom of late ?

Truly, I have been scorning delights, and living laborious days.

Brave stoic, again ! You will soon bristle with wisdom, Austin ; but you are very young yet. Do not live too much to yourself. You will miss all zest for life and

become dry, perhaps morbid, very learned, no doubt, but empty of heart—learned, uninteresting. There is time enough to live in a cloister. She raised her head after a pause, and touching his hand asked him, slyly, Don't you ever think of the Greek maidens dancing, bright eyes, and the wild waving tresses ?

A blue vestment, the cincture unguarded, the flash —

Now, Austin, not rude. It is much better to talk of our books. You promised to bring your Emerson to read to me, and the Shakespeare. We must not be remiss in our study. But, hush ! these people will miss us ; we must go out and join them. Get my cloud, Austin ; it is in the little room next the door. I will ask Miss Willoughby to play something—No, you ask her. I will get my cloak myself. You do not understand these things.

Nay, then, I'll go with you.

No, no, Austin, do as I say. It does not look well !

She went to get the cloak. Austin fol-

lowed. She turned, and held up her finger. The youngster bowed laughingly.

It does not do to give way to a woman, you know. Besides, this was my "duty." This is yours, and I will put it on to make you look—even handsome. This corner thrown over the shoulder—a blue vestment unguarded, a flutter of white, the flash —

She touched him lightly with her fan.

Naughty—come then.

Before they reached the drawing-room door was one which led to another side of the verandah and rendered it unnecessary to pass though the room. A song was just commenced.

Austin opened the door at the side; the verandah here was dark.

Come, we will go this way.

They passed through, and she paused, turning round.

But give me my cloak now, Austin.

Austin held it up, and threw it gracefully round her, accidentally catching the uplifted hand.

He held it for a moment in play. She did not withdraw. His pressure grew firmer. They both stood serious, with their eyes staring, looking one upon the other.

His chest rose and fell; it was again the deep tone as of the roll of the drum that seemed to be within him. He drew her to him, with his arm round her waist. Her head drooped.

This is wrong, Austin—this is wrong.

Austin made no reply. His clasp increased its pressure.

She looked up in surprise. His eyes were as bold as lions. He bent his head, his lips approached hers; she turned her head aside, and again it drooped. Her form shook, and her voice now expressed with force, and half with sobbing —

Oh, Austin! this is wrong. Say that it is wrong. Oh! let me go. She looked up into his face; in the dim light the features were ardent, beautiful. They were bent upon her. His eyes were glowing with fire. Afraid, she drooped her head. She was

trembling. It is wrong—it is very wrong! Say it is wrong, Austin—say it is wrong? Is it wrong, Austin—Austin?

And now she raised her head. He bent down to kiss; their lips met; her lips clung to his. She gasped, Someone comes!

With a strong bound she had forced herself free, and they stood facing each other, shamed and confused. No one came, but a few moments later they stepped round the corner quietly.

Ah, little babes in the wood! said Mrs. Neville, laughing at the bamboo lounges. Why did you not tell us that you were all so comfortable here?

Mrs. Neville was going in the morning with Mrs. Wilton into Dudley.

It's so early to have to get up, and then to have to come all this way to you, she said, putting on a tearful face and laughing.

Oh! stay with us overnight—that is —

Yes, yes; very well.

She disappeared, but ran to the gate after Austin to say good-bye. Her cheeks were red. Her eyes sparkled. She laughed, and

made a stroke to box his ears, and refused to give him her hand, but then at length taking his hand, held it tightly, and the lips met for a moment, and then, springing back, she ran away like a school-girl.

CHAPTER XX.

A MUTUAL repulse had succeeded. No prudent question now; it was a maddening passion that pressed its pictures on his brain. Time passed. The scene on the verandah haunted him. He could feel her lips touching his. He braced up his spirit. He plunged into work, and tried to keep his mind up to the heights of intellectual realms; or sought in the toil and fatigue of athletics some relief from the thoughts that haunted him. But he lived in a prison, a hot-house. He toiled onward, till the incessant strain became repugnant, and, in spite of himself, he began to slip into down-cast moods, and then he roused himself. Again the ardours of his mind carried him into rebellions against the meagreness of his

life, and he pictured half-amusedly, but very seriously, all the great exertions he would rejoice to undertake or the dangers he would run if but kisses were the prizes for it all.

The University sports were approaching, a great topic with these ingenuous young men. They raced for the laurel crown. It was as beautiful, immortal now, as when at the Olympic games it encircled Phayllos' brow.

To the flaxen-haired Gills and Austin was entrusted the honour of Richmond House.

Austin, you must come out to Wilmington to-morrow morning, so be ready to get up at five, Crossley said to him gravely one night.

Why? said Austin laughing,—without, of course, questioning your authority.

To see the horses training for the Cup. It's a grand sight. You can pick up some good hints there. Gills is coming out with us, and he has got a regular rage lately for backing horses, and doesn't know a horse from a cow. That's what makes him so cocksure of his tips. Besides, haven't you ever been out there?

No.

Oh, then you must come. It's a beautiful walk in the morning across the fields. It will take us an hour to get out, and we can stay there an hour, then an hour back, just in time for breakfast—you can eat a baby after that—and you might have a show for this quarter-mile race. If you're not satisfied call me a Dutchman.

One had no desire to misrepresent his nationality and the next morning Gills and Crossley and Austin were up betimes to take the air at Wilmington.

It was indeed a beautiful walk across the fields in the fresh healthy morning, and as Gills said, they were all as jolly as sand-boys. In this atmosphere Austin found delight in the very movement of the limbs, the play of mind, the access of livelier sympathies.

The training of the horses was a fine sight. Gills was continually being betrayed into a mere Freshman's enthusiasm, and Austin with his keenness almost crouched down as the horses swept by, to photograph

their forms upon his brain. The sturdy and knowing Crossley was much calmer.

Here with a beautiful swinging stride, elastic and free, cantered British Soldier by, his polished coat glancing like satin in the sun.

The poetry of motion, cried Austin.

A thick stockish man beside him, with a yellow spotted handkerchief around his neck, a man not usually given, one might think, to sentiment, joined in—Oh ze quality, ze quality, oh ze aristocrat! Oh, ze quality, oh, ze blooming plum.

Who's that? whispered Austin.

Tom Venison, the trainer. One of the real knowing birds.

Here was another, a coal black colt with an eye like a conqueror and a step full of pride as he marched along; here a skittish but beautifully formed little chestnut mare sprang with an easy lightness; and round and round galloped a sturdy bay, as if he would never tire. The pleasure was æsthetic, though to be sure the commentaries he heard around him had no ring of the

classics. Gills who had read up much on the subject was full of talk and in his hardihood contradicted Crossley.

Gills, said that authority, with severity, it's one thing to read about horses in the newspaper and another thing to know anything about them. When you're a little more experienced you'll know that the Marquis horses are crack two-year-olds, and never do much afterwards, and that the Panics always improve with age.

Look here, said Austin, you know that Godolphin?

Yes, the black horse with a head like a bull and loose throttle.

Well, I watched him most intently cantering and his positions were never like anything you see in pictures. It was more like that, and he drew a rough sketch of a horse in a very peculiar attitude.

Austin, said Crossley, you're a d—d fool!

How?

You never know what to look at. While those two horses Mercury and Saucepan

were doing their trial, you were looking at pictures, and didn't see that the grey was carrying lumps of weight over, and that the whole thing was a blind. And then there was that British Soldier, the aristocrat, as old Tom Venison called him; well, he's a fashionably bred 'un, but because he is a plum to look at, that doesn't say he'll do the trick. I never saw a horse yet win a big race that never did any better training than those tittity-ittity little canters of his. The best horse there was Merrimac, the iron-grey. You don't want a splendid shoulder when perhaps he has no feet to stand on, or grand quarters, or splendidly let down in the hocks, when he has no heart to do it with; but give me a horse tight and sound all over; just like that Merrimac, well ribbed up, hard as a rock, a stayer to the backbone. You laughed at his funny style of cantering, wait till they ask him the question! Wait till you see him extended. Did you notice what beautiful hands Sammy Holmes had?

NO, said Austin, quizzically, beautiful

hands I should have thought, more relative to a lady pianist, than to a horse-jockey.

Now, don't pretend to be such a damn'd greenhorn. You know very well what I mean. It's one thing to stick on a horse and another thing to ride. You want to know everything your horse is thinking about, and you want to take him along with you,—whew like flying.

And to the great interest of Austin and Gills, Crossley, for once in a talkative mood, discoursed to his own great delight, related all sorts of anecdotes about horses and their ways, and displayed a most intimate and curious knowledge of the same.

I'm glad we have had this long yarn together, Austin old fellow, he said, as they returned home at length ready for breakfast. Look here I think you'll win that quarter-mile.

H'm, reflected Austin. I scarcely spoke a word.

These trips to Wilmington now became quite frequent, and Kithdale Brown also came regularly, sometimes Mac, and at

length even the comfort loving Joseph was roused up once or twice.

The long walk, the delight of the animated scene, the lively talk, were abundant in pleasure. Crossley, who had undertaken Austin's training, was satisfied with his diligence at least.

Gillie's head, however, was always now running on horses and horse racing, and unknown to the other he had staked on the Ace a much larger sum of money than he could afford to lose. He was afraid to tell Crossley, for Crossley thought the Ace a "cock-tail;" Kithdale Brown would have laughed at him; and Joseph and Mac would have made him feel like a freshman.

However he told Austin, perhaps, Austin suspected, to let him know how well he was getting on. Austin looked at him grimly. "You're a knowing child, Gills. We'll see presently how this will turn out."

CHAPTER XXI.

AMONGST the acquaintances of Austin and Crossley, was one redoubtable old customer Geordie Smith, who had been a fair runner in his day, and whose memory went back to the days of Seward and Westhall, and who knew in his time Lang, the Crowcatcher, Jack White, of Gateshead, and the American Deer, as well as Deerfoot the Indian, and in a later day Nuttall and Buttery, and all the rest of them, and had seen Frank Hewitt run at Dudley. Austin was shrewdly inclined to think these heroes greater than any that ever won a wreath of parsley at Olympia, and possibly he was right. We know, alas, but little of the performances of the ancient Greeks, and the records seem a little contradictory, for Phayllos is recorded in the set

terms of a famous epigram, to have cleared 55ft. in a long jump, and we are left somewhat vaguely speculating as to what distance that really represents, for the greatest jump of modern days is 29ft. 7in., by Howard of Bradford, taking off from a wedge-shaped block of wood 4 inches high, and with the assistance of dumb bells. On the other hand we read, and it is somewhat of a blow to meet these details, that the Greeks ran "encouraging themselves with loud shouts," and that they fattened their gladiators for the boxing contests. Pheidippides travelled a distance of about 150 miles or something less in a couple of days, and was raised almost to the eminence of a demi-god. True, his journey was over rough country. The little band of warriors at Marathon charged a full mile. That, to be sure, was not bad, but it was not war, for they arrived a good deal "blown."

In our own day, however, Rowell completed 150 miles in something less than 23 hours, the first day of six, and Littlewood traversed nearly 630 in the working days of

the week. These feats were done on prepared tracks, of course, and with all manner of advantages, but probably there are plenty of amateurs to be found who could beat Pheidippides over his own ground. John L. Sullivan, called, is he not, the Boston Slogger, Slavin, Heenan, Sayers, Tom Cribb—did they fatten for their fights! Austin was full of this lore, and it was therefore delightful to him to hear Geordie Smith expound the style of Seward, who ran 100yds. with a flying start in $9\frac{1}{4}$ secs., so it was said, and how he beat Westhall for the 200yds., and Westhall went to his tent and wept. And those whom Austin knew were scarcely less brilliant, if at all. Who that had ever seen it in Dudley could forget how O'Brien ran through his mile like a school girl skipping a rope? And surely there was never a runner like Frank Hewitt, though Geordie Smith contended for the old ones—slight, beautifully modelled, classic in grace, lithe, perfect in balance as he used to stand at the mark, while arms extended, erect, quivering for the signal to go. Frank Hewitt had a remarkable

style, which Geordie Smith called "running in a hoop," not a bad image, as though indeed his body were fixed at the centre, and his feet, flung out and high towards the circumference, were treading down the whirling rim, then clewed up sharply behind. Even old runners would leap to their feet when he started, fairly charmed by that rare flying stride. This was the rhythm, the energy, the indomitable elasticity of step, that traversed the matchless half-mile in 1min. 53½secs.

Perhaps Chris Hanlan of Tarylvale was even greater, for walking is in general the most prosaic of movements, and therefore, like sculpture the severest test of poetry of all. Perhaps not the Theseus of Phidias, certainly not the David of Michel Angelo, was anything more wonderful than Chris Hanlan. Not the toilsome forcing efforts, not even the dashing spring and flinging march—it was an art more perfect still, the light quick step and natural walk, the upright gait—the limber muscles—that incomparable easy bending and perpetual rhythmic sinuous roll of the muscles

and limbs. The lights and shadows seemed to melt and run along the sweeping lines of the body, on the head, neck, torso, and legs, down to the mercurial feet, as in the rich velvet of a racehorse's coat, a cat, or the beautiful robe of a woman. That was walking. And Austin had seen these things, and was full of the lore of athletics gleaned, not only from the records, but from the instructive conversations of Crossley and Geordie. Therefore, he felt it to be a matter of life and death, pretty well, to win the race for which he was training.

There is only one man can touch you for the quarter, declared Crossley in confidence to his charge, the day before the sports.

Who is that?

Billy Bennet.

What, cried Austin, that sandy curly-headed little fellow with a face like a rat, and tight breeches like a jockey!

Austin, you're a *damned* fool. There you go again. British Soldier must win the Cup because he is drawn in such beautiful lines, and Billy Bennet can't whip you for

the quarter because—because he wears tight breeches, and talks slang. You'll find he's a spieler.

Amongst Austin's athletic friends the talk was generally interminable about horse racing and sports in general; and now the University sports was the topic in particular. Athletics was like a form of worship, or at least it was with something more than religious zeal that the rites and all the severe discipline of training were performed.

The University sports fell on one of the finest days of the year. The green of the oval dotted with the lightly-clad figures bending in graceful movements,—for they were “putting the weight,”—formed a fine picture. It was really classic. His eye swept round the oval; the crowd, the pavilions, the banners, the flags, the pomp and all the display irresistibly cheered one along. There was music, brassy, and martial, and loud, the roll of the drum, the braying of cornets and bugles. Stores of ladies were there in their beautiful toilettes; and the sober costumes of the men toned the picture;

while as might be expected the students showed up to their best, young, gallant in bearing, and well-shaped and handsome. Gills ran in the first race, and though a fat young man fairly surprised the spectators by his speed. Summerville who seemed as springy as a cork won easily and instantly began drawing those useful and cheerful articles with his mouth to the great amusement of the crowd, and Gills, faithful in his admiration of the famous Jimmy, was more delighted than if he had won the race himself. The walking match was won by the bass-voiced Adams, who had forsaken beer *for two whole months*,—a thick young man, yet he seemed fairly to dance along.

Austin caught sight of Dr. Charlwood among the crowd. What if Mrs. Charlwood and Mrs. Wilton and Mrs. Neville should be there! What if he were defeated and she witness it. No, no. That would not be. That could not be!

Take it cool, Austin, take it cool, said Crossley. Take this swig of brandy now. It'll warm you. Take it cool.

Now we'll see, said Austin, as he took a short run preliminary to the start.

Joseph pretended not to take much interest, but kept interjecting remarks, By Jove, he's bigger than I thought. Run it out, you know, run it out. . . . By Jove, he doesn't move badly.

Nearly a score of competitors followed.

Billy Bennet appeared. Austin was surprised to see "how splendidly he stripped,"—such was the correct phrase—rather small perhaps but well shaped; chest not broad but deep, trim waist, very powerful loins, the whole frame compact and "ship-shape." He was not very graceful; there was no spirit in his walk, and his carriage was that of an underling; but Crossley, in his astute way, had already quietly picked him out as the winner. The pistol cracked, and the whole field broke away.

The pace, said Crossley, is a clinker, as he watched them sweep round the back of the course. If Austin's got it in him he'll make his spurt there where I told him just at that flag.

Sure enough he did, and dashed out from the ruck.

Austin, Austin, Austin, shouted Crossley and Gills, and Mac, and Kemp, and especially Joseph, and a hundred others in chorus. The dim sound came to his ears. Every sinew was in tension as he raced.

A moment later out sprang the trim shape of Billy Bennet and just behind Austin's heels he ran lightly, he reached him,—a tussle, and Billy with a bracing of the arms had shot by—let his hands fall on his hips, turned half round scarcely checking his speed, and cried, Come along, Brandt! and flinging his hands above his head danced in the easiest of winners.

A storm of applause greeted the feat. His friends rushed out. Billy pretended to faint, and they carried him in on their shoulders in triumph. Austin's overthrow was too decisive even to permit of chagrin, therefore he laughed. Crossley was the only one who had any right to feel aggrieved, but after throwing his towel at him and admonishing the youngster on his foolishness in general

he hoped that this would be a lesson to him, and forgave him.

Langden was second in the high jump. He wore a beautifully tinted silk singlet embroidered with a ruby heart, and brushed his hair as if for a ball-room, after putting it on. He had been a famous jumper in his day, but that was years ago when Langden still was innocent.

CHAPTER XXII.

A PAPER chase and a dinner at the Merry England at Templestowe was the next business projected by the ever active Summerville. That worthy hero had however in the meantime been rusticated, and his fate was the topic of conversation at the party which had gathered at Joseph's room. As Gills put it, nearly everyone was there.

What? Is Summerville rusticated? inquired Crossley.

Yes, didn't you know? Here was a chance for Gills. He came into the Mid. lecture with a big harp and a sheet under his arm, and sat at the back. Well, the Prof. is short-sighted you know and didn't notice him. Schulters ran round the back, turned the gas nearly out, and there was Jimmy sitting in his

long white sheet and he had a long beard like a druid and began to play, "What will my poor mother say?" Oh, Heaven it was good.

And he was rusticated?

Oh, yes, but what does Jimmy care for that? He said he didn't. Jimmy Summerville will live for ever at the Medical School!

You can't pack him, said Wilson sententially.

The conversation now ranged generally but dwelt much as was the fashion in those days upon the manly qualities considered to be most attractive to the fair sex. Gills here too was extravagant in his praise of Summerville.

Jimmy has just the style for them; any amount of cheek, and knows exactly how to soft soap them, he said, and continued to affirm in the choicest vernacular, that would be unintelligible to those outside that cultured sphere, that Summerville had broken more tender hearts than any fellow of his day, and that his adventures in pursuit of this interesting pastime were more various and more lively than any on tradition, a good deal

more so he added with an exquisite air, than some people think. Gills was, however, evidently making too much point of his enjoyment of the confidence of Summerville.

That's all very well, said Wilson. You later generation always go for your own men, but we could tell a thing or two about the old ones. Eh ? Joseph. Joseph nodded.

Even J. R. M. wasn't out of it, Eh ? Joseph. When Flora Dunon the actress tried to poison herself over him, or leaving out present company—Joseph was pulling his moustache in an abstracted manner,—Langden and Romanoff.

No, said Joseph, they've both got better style than Jimmy. Wait till you've been here another year, Gillie, and you'll become initiated into the inner mysteries. Romanoff ran through a fortune his governor left him following an actress through Europe.

This took the wind out of Gillie's sails, but he was generous in disposition and now at once conceded the superiority of Romanoff's claims to greatness.

That's what gives him the touch of heart.

disease he's got, was Wilson's quiet rejoinder.

Ah, said Gills. Romanoff's victory was complete, when suddenly a bump against the door was heard and in burst the redoubtable Summerville himself. He was panting for breath but still his eyes twinkled and the corners of his mouth endeavoured to wreath themselves upward into his well-known smile. His costume was somewhat scanty, and they all crowded round him with excitement.

Oh Lord, that was a narrow shave, he said and began with infinite humour to relate how in consequence of certain unlucky circumstances he had had a rare chase by a policeman and how as might have been expected he had soon outrun the constable and was pulling up, somewhat warm and out of breath, when another joined in the pursuit.

It was cruel, he said. I was already a little pumped. I had it out with one man and here comes another fresh. He could spiel too and—by Jove, he caught me! He put his hand on my shoulder—but I slipped off my coat! He staggered and fell, heavily,

thank the Lord, I was round the corner in a twinkling and saw the hospitable door of Joseph open, dashed in, nearly knocked the old lady down on the stairs—the women are always getting in my way—and here I am. Oh Lord, have you any beer ?

Beer, a barrel if he wanted it !

I shall be in form for the paper-chase, said Jimmy, good training, you know, a “sweater in blankets.” This reference to the flight in the overcoat brought down the house ; they could almost have carried him home shoulder high.

Ah, said Joseph, a good thing Jimmy’s in our set, they couldn’t appreciate him anywhere else.

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The paper-chase was a great success. Summerville and Bennet were hares, and were never caught. A fair number, Clive, Dyring, Ray, Stewart, Davis, Wilson, MacDermott, and Austin ran out triumphantly. Gillie tried hard, but had to pull up, and trudge in great discomfort at the end. All the veterans, Langden, Romanoff,

Joseph, and the others, went out in cabs. J. R. M. was also down. The exchequer was high he declared in great good humour. He had performed an operation on a man whom he had impressed with extraordinary confidence, and had received an instrument-case and a sum of twenty pounds as a testimony of gratitude.

By Jove, said Romanoff to Joseph, a doctor would have thought twice before he tackled it. Jimmy's ignorance pulled him through.

J. R. M.'s first care was to pay some debts, viz., those of honour. On this point he was scrupulous, though to be sure his extension of the term went no further than money lost at cards. Tradesmen's bills were things of vulgar notice, and money lent—well let bygones be bygones. So altogether he was very happy and made a great figure at the Merry England dinner. In fact as he clinked glasses with his dear old friend, now Dr. Black, he declared it was like the bloom of the ancient days again. Everyone was on his mettle that night. Summerville was a hero. When the waitresses were out

of the room, or ought to have been, he sang his ever-popular song, "I wish they'd do it now."

Langden played the accompaniment, and sang "Love never sleeps." Romanoff's conversation was generally studiously correct in choice of words. He had to keep up his position as arbiter by a sort of aloofness. He never got drunk, although he was always willing to drink, and vice altogether was too precious a thing for Romanoff to squander. One might know then how popular, how successful, this dinner was. Romanoff relaxed from his *aplomb* and gave his famous, but hitherto unheard, stump oration.

Austin had run out with one of his rowing friends, Clive. Clive was a handsome fellow, with a great reputation for brains and as Austin used to declare built like a very Antinous. Whether from vanity, or a half-conscious feeling of pictorial effect, he used to dress for the rowing in the scantiest of singlets, torn and ungirt, short drawers, and boots; and standing with the oar resting on his left shoulder the other arm thrown lightly

over his head, his attitude of careless grace displaying the limbs muscular and shapely, he looked, with the ruddy beaming face, bold eyes, and white teeth, a type of manly beauty, an athlete, a hero.

By Jove, Clive, you're a Greek, Austin said.

Clive was the son of a clergyman but had lately been assiduous to show that no pharisaical self-righteousness had clung to him. He drank like Alexander, and tried to ply all his friends with the liquor.

Austin wished to get away. No, Austin, do not go yet, old fellow, said Clive. It will be great fun, the march home. About twenty of us have agreed to walk into town together after one o'clock, and to spend every stiver in our pockets! It will be great fun in the cool of the night.

Yes, it would be great fun, marching shoulder to shoulder, arm in arm, running, dancing, talking, laughing, singing, roaring—from the Marseillaise in French, (Clive's specialty) down to "Kitty Wells," "John Brown," or the "Old Rogerram." They would stop at every inn, quaff the British

beer—and spend every stiver in their pockets ! Clive laughed as he looked into Austin's eyes, and Austin felt pleasure even that so handsome a fellow had been given unto earth. There was a magnetism in the broad fibre of the unconscious Greek. Austin rose, shook his hand, placed his finger mysteriously to his lips, and still laughing marched away. This was before the festivities had rightly started.

Where is he going ? inquired Joseph of Clive.

He says he wants to go home !

Did you ever see such a d—d fellow in your life, cried Joseph, and he tossed up his head in despair, as though he had done with him for ever.

Austin regained the fresh air.

What a beautiful night for a walk. I will walk home. I feel the want of movement ; that wine was warming. Ha, this is Wednesday. Let me see. I will go out and see Mrs. Charlwood to-night.—Yes, I have not been out for a month. She will wonder—h'm.

Whether he had vague hope of finding Mrs. Neville there, he did overtly take into thought, but now he was all fever to go. Lately Mrs. Neville's image had pursued him—it was like the temptations of the evil one—and she too had inquired through Mrs. Charlwood.—He must settle this once for all. Yes, yes to be sure, and then all would be clear. This was a duty—

Here, driver, drive me into Dudley quick, and get there before nine. Well, then, a half-crown extra. So.

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Mrs. Charlwood and Mrs. Wilton were holding a quiet *tête-à-tête* when Austin entered. They were glad to see him, and twitted him over his defeat at the sports, and soon he began to look a little disappointed now that he had come.

We hardly ever see her now, Austin.

Who?

Sweet innocent, you're an interesting child. There is such a delightful *naïveté* about you. Sometimes she wants us to go round in the carriage to fetch you, but I'm

going to stand on my dignity now ; and sometimes when she thinks you are coming she stays away herself.

And Mrs. Charlwood laughed very much, inordinately.

But here take this wine, boy. Why you might possibly call on her to-night. The night is still young. No ? Come then drink this and Mrs. Wilton will sing you a song.

She poured out three glasses, and Mrs. Wilton sang as charmingly as ever. Mrs. Charlwood laughed very much when he declared it was getting late, he must go.

You have not been here half-an-hour. Well then promise to come out next Sunday. She will not be there, for we'll tell her you're coming !

He promised and departed, and the ladies discussed the little comedy.

Well see the prude herself in the toils.

Pooh, said Mrs. Wilton, who had a great liking for Mrs. Neville—if she has sense enough not to give it to the town crier.

That's right enough, but she was sharp

enough—well with other people for less things than that.

The run out to the Merry England and the wine he had drunk excited him. The conversation of the ladies had not calmed his mind. He was full of life he felt, but there was a hungry feeling about him, that impelled him, without an object, on. He walked very fast and by force of habit home. But what could I do there, I couldn't go to bed. It's too late to work, and reading would only make me excited. Let me see. I'll walk about the town, and watch the faces of the people as they pass and see what's to be seen. It's a perfect picture gallery in every way more interesting than dead canvas. Great heavens, those sailors are very drunk. A cheery individual--the "'ot pies, saveloys, baked potatoes all 'ot" fellow, and that oyster man is a regular type with his velvet cap there and that dapper coat. What a voice! That's the fellow who found he had left his knife behind near the University the night we wanted some oysters. Now that took him a

good half-hour—nothing sold in that time; hang him, he must be a burglar, and this “oyster-e-e-s” of his must be a blind, or else the poor devil has to work in the day time as well to knock out a living.—I’ll have a dozen and talk with him. What kind of a fish is he, I wonder!

And so he went on. The night was fresh, and his spirits were eager. Every new face had its tale or he tried to guess, at least, and find a tale to his liking. His steps led him along towards Harrison Street and here where four roads met he stood in doubt which way to take, looking first up one road and then up another. There was a small vacant lot at the corner, and a little higher up the street the first house, a neat little cottage, had a small garden in front, and at the side a wooden gate painted red.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

GILLS came back from the Merry England next day, pale, dissipated, wretched, and as Crossley described it in the vernacular “very fishy about the eyes.” He had played cards nearly all night, had lost money, and for the rest had amused himself in ways known to himself,—for Gills was decidedly no freshman now, and plumed himself not a little on his growing reputation.

Joseph heard of Gillie’s losses, and gave him a very serious lecture on the folly of gambling in general and his absolute “asininity” in particular; assured him that his failure at the Examination was a foregone conclusion unless he promised for the rest of his time to work, and work hard.

Gills gave the required promise, begged, however, that the little dissipation of the races be allowed, but did not say that he had put more money on the Ace than he really had wherewith to pay. Joseph gave a grumbling consent.

You can't afford to go knocking about right and left as you think some of these others do. It's not every man's a Romanoff, said he. And besides both Langden and Romanoff do a good deal more work together than you think. They're in the same year and if they only discuss the lectures together at dinner, that's something. They have both got brains and they know when to put in some good work and what to stew at. Then there's Summerville, well he can run circles round you, and to top that he gets plucked. He is always taking exercise too and doesn't get muddled. You can't drink like J. R. M. He's got nothing else to do; and you can't stand a fifth part. You play Euchre and you'll never learn to play the game because you're beginning to fancy lately you're above telling; and you contradicted Crossley about

racing and scarcely know a horse from a cow, and asked if *Ben Bolt* had a show for the *Oaks* !

Gills sulked a little, declared he would never let anyone else talk to him like that. But he soon displayed a great zeal to get back to Joseph's good books.

The Cup was run. The Ace did not win, but came third, and that delighted Gills for Crossley's pick was only seventh.

When it came to settle though, Gills was in a great fix.

He dared not tell Joseph ; it would make him look small before Langden and Romanoff ; Summerville was out of town and never had money when he was in. Gills borrowed all that Austin had, but that was far from sufficient. He wrote a mysterious letter to his sisters, and they, in a very kind note, sent him their savings of months. Still that was insufficient, and Gills face to face with commercial difficulties sat down at length and wept.

Pop your watch, said Clive. It was a gold one with an inscription from his father.

I couldn't do that, what could I tell the Governor ?

Pop it, said Clive, and when the vacation comes round I'll pop mine to get yours out. And you can have it then all the time you're at home. It will be all right about me.

This arrangement amused Gills immensely. It went the round of his friends, and these and many others of his exploits caused some of the younger disciples to couple the name of Gills even with that of Jimmy Summer-ville himself.

T A R E S.

CHAPTER XXIV.

It would be hard to trace out all the tumults and changes of feeling that Mrs. Neville in these days endured. Again and again, a hundred times, she had thrown herself down in prayer and again and again she had risen up with calm and settled strength. Oh, to decide my fate for ever in this hour. She tried to take a calm regard of all her life. There was a barrenness, a drear waste, in this renunciation, now that she had accomplished it. In that very moment she had fallen again. Then a hundred times—mutiny, the desire to fling herself into his arms. Then there was a sort of wild baffling,

a beating out thoughts from the gates of her mind, the clinging to passion, ah, the reaping of kisses; then the precipitance, fearing that good influences might gain on her, asserting their sway, and rob her again of her kisses, the impatience, as though chasing the hours, the hours that were breaking the force of impetuous thoughts, the shrinking from aid, the dread of good angels, as of a struggle demanded, that heart-rending toil she had so often endured, the toil up the heights—then, the certainty of that, the obedience, the hating of evil—a wonder at tumults so strange.

At other times: she would treat Austin as a friend. She fondly persuaded herself. Nay, it was a duty. She would be a guide to him. His work would be hers. That thought she could cherish in honour. She would aid him in every way, and he would at length rise to high position and be able to realize his projects; he would triumph through her. She longed to make some offering, to make some sacrifice, if but that would help in some great work. What could

she do ? Yes, if the hour came she could die, and she often thought of death. . . . Ah, death. What an exquisite ravishment there was in that wild idea, the terrible beauty of death. . . . Again. Perhaps he had no love for her. He toyed with her. The mere thought was a madness. She rose up in her pride. She could slay him if that could be true. Sometimes, she would deride herself, stinging herself with ridicule and all manner of reproaches—the plaything of a boy. And then the consequences of a fall to him and to her. She started. No ! No ! She would escape out of this—she would go on a long voyage.—Never to see him again.

She could not read, she could not play, she could not think now as before. In reading, playing, reclining on her sofa, listless her mind would wander, and her fancy recall the scenes she had known. Words, verses of poetry, strains of music that she had been familiar with a hundred times before came with a new discovered pathos now, impressing feelings, fine, so sweet, yet so yearning that they swept like pain through her mind.

Disturbed, ardent, but with no outlet, her force but defeated itself and her mind was plunged into dreams. Sometimes a mere word or a name would wake a world of memories and curious recollections. It seemed as if it were not she who directed her thoughts, rather they took possession of her, and held before her the succession of their images, sometimes slow-moving, very beautiful, then again tempestuous, impulsive, with strange and wild upleapings and longings for something out of this life, yet possible. Pictures in books she had not read for fifteen years came back to her—this of a young girl with a large old-fashioned straw hat, standing pensive; ah, Lotta, was it? or Fantine? No, no. It was the Guillotined Woman—a wretched book, moreover: now the figure of a young man under the cliffs of a surf beaten shore: now an extended landscape, seen from the turn of the road from the heights where she stood, far beneath, and far distant, yet wide and clear and distinct, right out to the solitary mountain with the glinting, the faint silver gleam of the lake at

its base . . . then a city of mighty palaces with their round pillars, colossal and grand, where a river laved the imperial stairs, the terraces, walls, colonnades; and over this wonderful Broadway of commerce, strewn with argosies, gondolas, barges, the sun's light threw a pavement of gold making it like a floor of a temple of Gods; and far beyond the bastions of the city the vision was led away to the hills of the west, quiet, empurpled, eternal . . . or again an ivy-mantled ruin in a still sequestered valley through which the little stream flows peacefully; or now she was looking into the blue waters of a quiet pool beneath a shady tree; and now she had lost sight of the pool and saw the blue of the summer sky and the fleecy clouds; and these too faded now and forms of fairy dreams passed through her mind and lapped her in a soft delight. It was sweet to beguile the hours with dreams like these, to live a beautiful life and beneath these orange trees with their golden fruit and their perfume to hold the hand of a being loved, to look into eyes.—It was *his*

eyes she was looking into; she looked into their depths and they became more real and vivid and she felt his touch and her bosom rose and fell and sank and struggled. And still trembling and fluttering, in all vicissitudes the thoughts of love would come; and she would dwell in recollection on the words and each particular scene that stood out so boldly wherein she pictured him. They impressed themselves upon her mind till they seemed all to live for, and the pictures moved, each with its particular stress; and the scene in the verandah was acted in her mind and she looked again into the basilisk eyes and felt almost palpably the touching of his lips and tasted of the kisses' painful sweets, and the tumult of her breast grew confused, and she started then, and struggled in her anguish again to resist.

Oh, she cried, that I could for ever shake off these thoughts that lead to infamy, that for this wild intoxication would rob me of my duty, fair fame, my woman's honour. And yet with all her struggles she felt herself falling slipping away from her own deter-

minate control. She did not know herself. It was no sensual passion that impelled her breast, the feeling inevitable, natural—to her, now, fatal and shameful; that feeling springing from a thousand sources in our nature, curiously mingling, springing from primeval source, developed and adorned by all the hopes, impulses, sweet desires, that cry aloud for sympathy, the crying to another soul, the look, the tender tones,—that feeling that in all its strange bewilderment our mortal race calls love.

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It was after a long separation that Austin and Mrs. Neville had met at Mrs. Charwood's again.

He walked silently, moodily it seemed to her, and she had already looked up in inquiry twice.

Austin she called very softly, at length.

Well?

Austin, is it not possible for two of a different sex to be as good friends—to be friends—nothing more. To wish in the same way unselfishly for each other's good

and—oh you must know what I mean—why should it not be so? Do you think so?

She walked with her head bent down.

I don't know, he said churlishly.

You are right, she said after a pause, for the world will say —

The world will say. Estimable prudence, noble guides! The world, selfish, sordid, superficial, stirred by no generous impulse, soulless and base, measuring all things by its own vulgar standards. And this it is that controls your life and swallows up its scope. Woman's love! And this, this after all is the censor, and your whole life is measured by this. Good woman. And marriage appears to be but a narrow bargain, a contract, with the conditions all weighed. And so your pretty day runs. To be sure there are jewels and fine vestments, and coaches and attendants, and all kinds of entertainments and vanities, and fashion, and insincere forms. It has something of unreality about it, as though there were a mist over life itself, and you walk like puppets through a meaningless

comedy. Where is your life? artificial, deluded, cheating yourself, inept, worthless — You!

With head bent low she shrank and cowered before him. She felt as if he had seized her by the hair and were dragging her with violence through the mud. She felt a poor wretch, as though she had been mad, and were now waking into a rough world. There was a savageness, a bitterness, an impetus of rejection, more in his manner than in his words. They walked on in silence. They arrived at last at the gate. How often had they stood a moment there radiant with high talk, their hands pressed in fair friendliness together, their eyes looking to each other encouragement and hope, the hearts of both light with a healthy spirit.

Now she trembled and hesitated. He looked at her. Her face was pale and haggard, her eye inert and dull. His heart smote him. He took her hand. There was no feeling in it. She made no resistance as he drew it to his side. He stroked it with his.

Forgive me, he whispered as he bent his

head. I have wronged you. Forget it now. He passed his arm gently around her waist still bending down to her and speaking in a pleading voice. Look up to me once more. And he drew her head to him, and she began to sob. She felt undone, exhausted of spirit, weak, and helpless. He kissed her, and she made no effort to resist. My darling, let us then be friends. Nay, let us be sincere. I love you, and you are mine. The world; he tossed back his head; the world I defy and fling its worthless judgments away. See, here, now your cheeks have regained their warmest tint, and your eyes too, darling, will they not look up? My darling. My darling. Nay then give me a kiss. And he folded her in his arms. She trembled, she wavered, she wept.

In her room she sat down on her couch, listlessly. She could not think. She could not make effort. She was undone. She was in his power. She knew it.

Faith is our guide, our bond, she had once said to him. But that faith being gone—

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Now, reason, honour, and all restraint, he shook away. He was impelled. In his blood raged a fever. Her image wrought into his brain. He was seized. Struggle and tumult were forced on his mind. His sleep was a drunkard's, dreaming of her, distorted and frightful. Then that access would pass, and at no time in his waking hours did he seem unable to cope with evil promptings and to reassert his judgment, calm and clear. What restrained? The weight and strength of character already founded and built, words of good omen, memories, good thoughts of the past, the momentum of hopes, resolution; but it was the stone of Sisyphus. Good influences were dimly felt, so far off, so hopelessly distant, he was as with a relaxing drug stupefied, lowered in type, yet not lulled; his mind was glutted with sensual feasts. Yet beneath all a bold chord had vibrated, and waked a thousand worlds of new life.

They had come. He, Mrs. Charlwood and Mrs. Wilton, to have their musical evening, but Mrs. Neville was cold and

spiritless. The visitors had one or two small purchases to make, they explained.

We have come to say that we cannot stay, like Austin one night, said Mrs. Wilton laughing, but I wish to settle my dress a moment though; and they retired into Mrs. Neville's room.

Austin ! called out Mrs. Charlwood, and Austin sprang up and came running in.

Austin ! Austin ! cried Mrs. Neville, and Mrs. Wilton in a breath, as he burst into the room. Mrs. Wilton was before the mirror exuberant as a Venus of Rubens or Jordaens, with her ample shoulders, white throat, and swelling bust. What do you mean ? The Venus of Jordaens was blushing, indignant, bending with a singular coyness, massive and broad.

Why ? What ? Mrs. Charlwood called me !

Yes, said Mrs. Charlwood, scarcely able to repress her amusement, but, Austin, not to run and bound in like—like a wolf on the fold ! Come. I was wishing to tell you we could not stay the whole evening. And

come let me talk to you the words of wisdom, for you seem, young man, to be much in need of guidance, and she laughed her mellow laugh.

It was necessary in going from Mrs. Neville's room to the parlour to pass through a little ante-chamber or boudoir.

Here she had stopped. I like the idea of this little room, so tasteful, is it not. Where does that door lead to. Ah, so to the passage. This is a dainty little band box of a place. And what book's this, she's been reading. Burns' poems. "From Austin Brandt."

Fie, Austin! you sentimental little fool.

Mrs. Wilton sang and Mrs. Neville essayed with her a duett, Burns' beautiful love song, "O wert thou in the cauld blast," and then played a piece of Schubert. She began to glow. Very beautiful she looked. Her eyes were like soft lamps. The classic coif set off the shapely head. The plain velvet robe she wore fitted well the sinuous movements of her form.

But come, Jessie, it is better to go now

and we will have time for a chat when we return. We will not be more than half-an-hour.

No, Austin, it would not be polite to take you away and leave our hostess all alone! We will not be long. They will probably be able to amuse themselves till we come back, she added to Mrs. Wilton as they left.

The door closed, and his eye met hers. She was stricken. She could not repress the quickening beat of pulse. She beat at every loophole in despair. She looked up at him, and smiled faintly. Then she rose and slowly paced the room with head bent down, then looking at him steadily she approached, and sat on the piano stool. One arm was raised and the other hung by her side, round and smoothly tapering into graceful fingers. She was beautiful. The features were refined, and now a soft warm fervour was suffusing them. All these things Austin saw as his eye swept rather confusedly along the lines. She was the first to break the silence, drawing a deep inspiration and mastering her voice.

Now, Austin, let us talk about our books. Stop, I'll bring my Emerson, and you can read to me till they come back. She rose.

No, said Austin, not just now. Let us talk, or I will repeat you some passages from memory. He sat on the foot-stool by her feet and took her hand.

“ A sensitive plant in a garden grew,
And the young winds fed it with silver dew,
And it opened its fan-like leaves to the light,
And closed them beneath the kisses of night.

“ And the Spring arose on the garden fair,
Like the Spirit of Love felt everywhere ;
And each flower and herb on Earth's dark breast
Rose from the dreams of its wintry rest.

“ But none ever trembled and panted with bliss,
In the garden, the field, or the wilderness,
Like a dove in the noon-tide with love's sweet want
As the companionless Sensitive Plant.

“ The snowdrop and then the violet
Arose from the ground with warm rain wet,
And their breath was mixed with fresh odour, sent
From the turf, like the voice and the instrument.

Beautiful indeed, she said. Almost impalpable in its subtle sense. Continue—Austin ; dear Austin, was almost on her lips. He touched her arm and it was soft and warm.

Austin did you ever hear of Joseph? she said.

His fingers trembled along the surface; this was serious. Her hand lay unresistingly in his. He leant over and pressed it against his cheek and looked up into her face.

Austin, this is not right. We ought to pass the time with better, with higher things than this.

There was no firmness in her voice, her face was agitated, almost to painfulness. He held both hands in his as he pressed them to his cheek. Her chest heaved and her eyes glowed deeper. He leant his head upon her breast and coiled the graceful arms about his neck. He could feel the fluttering, the irregular but rapid strokes, the spasmodic beating of her heart. He passed his hands round her neck drew her head to him, slowly, and kissed the ripe lips and—Leave me! she cried and suddenly sprang erect, a wild terror in her eyes.

He drew her to him. Her form shook and seemed to struggle as though with sobs. The startled look gave way to suffering.

We have kept our word ; we have not been more than half-an-hour you see, was heard Mrs. Charlwood's cheery voice behind the door. They entered fresh and smiling.

Mrs. Neville was at the piano, playing Weber's Last Waltz, playing with exquisite softness, and lingering on the notes. Austin was seated at a small side table slowly turning over the leaves of a book, "Florentine Painters."

She had washed away all trace of her tears.

I might have thought you had a quarrel, said Mrs. Charlwood looking keenly from one to the other, you were sitting so quietly when we came.

Oh no, was Mrs. Neville's rejoinder carelessly, for music hath charms to soothe the savage breast.

The savage sat turning over the leaves of the book slowly, not without appreciation of the refinements of mediæval art. His features were composed, almost placid in their perfect balance.

Oh, then let us encourage so amiable an

example ; and then you will sing a little will you not, Jessie ?

Or better first, said Mrs. Neville leaving the piano and busying herself settling some ornaments upon the mantelpiece.

But when does Mr. Neville come home ?

Soon.

Then I don't want to meet his cross face to-night. We will go now and select an evening again.

Mrs. Neville accompanied them to the door.

Mrs. Charlwood was in rare good spirits that evening. It was deliciously cool and the stars were shining in the naked heavens overhead. They had reached the gate.

Stop, said Austin suddenly, I have forgotten something. He returned. The door was not closed. He ran rapidly along the passage bounded up the stairs and entered the parlour.

Mrs. Neville was in her boudoir—she had heard his step. She came and stood standing near the door ; it was a picture that remained in his memory. A handkerchief was in her

hand ; it rested lightly on a little table. Her right arm was hanging by the side. The head was turned away, and the tears were flowing bitterly, unregarded.

Austin stood at the door and looked. She raised her arms and stretched out her hands to him. He sprang forward and took them in his. He looked at her averted face with strange earnestness. Slowly, and with her eyes blinded with tears, she turned her countenance and met his gaze. A moment—and she offered her lips. He kissed her. Go now, she said.

Mrs. Charlwood entertained them on the way home with a thousand pleasantries. Come, Austin, walk here between us, and give me your hand. Many a little touch of the conversation reached him with its subtle turn. She pressed his hand. She was puzzled. Was there ever such an unimpressible little fool, she thought.

Austin himself though was beginning to read the lines of her face much better now. He was learning.

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Austin's mind was drenched with voluptuous imaginings. He approached women in cynical guise and met them with a deep contempt. He was thrown with those that nourished wicked thoughts and even as "Good the more communicated more abundant grows," so Evil. To Mrs. Neville the fall had come at first as if the Veil of Fate had been torn aside and she from outside herself, had beheld herself, her life. She gazed almost less in horror than in unbelief, unacceptance, as in a dream, then, slowly, came the strange fascination of realization and desire. Gradually her manner changed. She made no coyness about her kisses now. She laughed at Mrs. Charlwood's allusions. She connived with Austin at clandestine meetings, and, now, what so short a time ago she would have shrunk from, allowed Mrs. Wilton to enjoy her tacit confidence. That favoured their interviews. Her conversation too was flippant, her glances, the expression of her face became of a lower cast. While she was yielding to his will and made shipwreck of her dignity, with

ever more solicitous desire to please his growing fickleness, she destroyed the charm that bound him to herself. She had lost her self-respect. How could she expect respect from him ?

The gifts of mind, the sensitive spirit, the fine feeling, the encouragement, the strength she had given him, all vanished with her duty. These fought against her now.

Weep in secret she might. Her heart might break for that—but she was sinking, she knew it, in his regard even as in her own.

This was inevitable in Austin, and not all from heartlessness. He beheld now a sensual woman before his eyes. Other ties were lost.

Mrs. Wilton was faithful enough to her confidence, but Mrs. Charlwood's suspicions were becoming surer every day.

She determined to try a surprise. It was not delicate. . . .

What, did Austin — ? cried Mrs. Neville.

No, Austin did not replied the smiling Mrs. Charlwood in reassuring tone but, while

the other was distressed in shame, why did you not tell me? Pooh. These are *maudlin tears*. By Heaven, it's your just revenge. So handsome too the cavalier.

Was she taking a delicate delight in stinging her? She certainly smiled good-naturedly.

Your secret's safe enough. But be discreet. He is already suspicious—a guilty conscience. But come, look up and smile. A glass of wine. You must though—I'll keep the secret. It's quite right. “Maudlin tears” no! We'll clink the glasses—To Love! We will be the best of friends now. And they talked away together on very friendly subjects. . . . And Miss Matlock is to be married on Thursday, eh? And you will be sisters-in-law! She has you to thank for that. Impertinent little minx she is all at once. Well, we'll see. She has good eyes, but her teeth spoil her.

CHAPTER XXV.

AUSTIN had become alarmed for his course and worked desperately hard. That was not so difficult to do now either, for amusements and frivolities had been put aside and work was the order of the day in Richmond House.

Good Heavens, Austin, remonstrated Joseph, don't go on like that. You'll kill yourself!

Austin shook his head fiercely, and worked as though that were indeed his intention. But it was too late.

The examinations were over once more. Austin was unsuccessful, the only one in the house, except of course J. R. M.

He had gone home wasting with illness. This University business was a disastrous

affair, meditated Matthew Brandt. He discussed with his spouse the advisability of breaking off his course even now. He seems to wither like a transplanted shrub, he said.

Mrs. Gray sought him out. She asked him how was the Byronism. He turned away.

But Austin, she cried and clung to his hand, and you haven't been up to see Mrs. Shenstone yet. But come, Austin. Now Austin, think—you know how good she is —

No Jessie. He looked as though about to speak, then shaking off her hand, No, leave me, and walked away with his head down.

To go to the hill and lie stretched under the shade of a tree was a healthy instinct. He could see from there his own home, and Mrs. Shenstone's house, and most of the town. And so the listless hours slipped by.

I think, said Mrs. Shenstone, that he lets his non-success at the examination depress him too much. But then, when he was ill—

H'm, said Mrs. Gray.

Austin took long walks by himself, or

sought out the company of Jack Clancy, Sam Chubb, and old Ben.

Faith Shenstone he met once in the street. She was coming towards him—in blue and red, a graceful apparition. She checked herself as she caught sight of him, looked at him very seriously in the face. He raised his hat and she bowed very gravely.

A most dignified little lady, said Austin laughing heartily.

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Sam Chubb and Jack Clancy talked much during the evenings of the impending elections and politics home and international in general. Sam was the real sustainer of these conversations. When he was absent the exchanges between the other old cronies were very desultory — An' I'll tell y' who was second,—interval of forty seconds — it was Lamplighter —. Or else—. . . Only a few specks on the bottom of the dish . . . H'm, h'm . . . Heigho must be clearing out of this, you know. . . . Hear good reports of Broken Hills . . . some doing well, most of 'em not. This was a sign of the hard times at Taryl-

vale. Luck had smitten Jack rather badly of late, but he was brave and hopeful as ever. His day of hard toil finished he used to sit at night cobbling away on his bench, while his trusty comrade smoked a meditative pipe, and sat and read the newspapers and discoursed oracularly on statesmanship. The foreign policy of Russia was Sam's strong point, but he could descend to trifles gracefully.

Look here, thin, I don't know what we want going to Dudley for our members at all, Jack Clancy affirmed. Let them represent Dudley and let the country represent itself, and he hammered away with the decision on the sole of a boot and gave the critical look of an artist. Ah, if we had the father there, he said to Austin. But he would go in on the Catholic ticket and the bigots hate us. Jack gave this with much emphasis—not without a certain unction, and looking at Jack Austin felt much amused. With his round red, good-humoured face, and his crisp chestnut hair, Jack looked a model of a hated being.

Jack, said Austin, if it were in the Dark Ages they'd burn you at the stake !

They would. Bedad, they would. They would ! and Jack nodded his head with much asseveration.

Ah, if the old man would only shtand why half the Prodestants (he did not say Protestants without an embellishment) half the Prodestants would vote for him ! I don't know a man in the place that wouldn't !

Matthew Brandt was in fact Jack Clancy's hero.

Living or dead he once declared there never was, and never will be, such a man again.

That there won't, concurred the meditative Sam.

Ah, and Jack hammered away lustily.

Now look here, Austin, said he, and he cocked his eye with a sort of confidential air. Austin looked very grave.

I've known many of your members of parliment ; had 'em here in this shop ; spoke to 'em ! Took the measure of one of 'em, that there fellow Gannon, it was there, for a

pair of Wellington boots. Yes, sor, that was the style then. It was the beaver hat, the swallow tail coat, *and*—the Wellington. Well I've known a good few of 'em, as I'm telling ye, but very few knows, I'm telling ye now, very few knows more than—and he pointed to the meditative Sam who was determinedly absorbed in his paper—more than that gentleman there.

Austin admired the delicacy at once and distinction of Jack's phraseology. "That gentleman there" was good.

That gentleman there still read on.

Yes, continued Jack speaking with a tack in his mouth, I've known some of them that warn't fit to carry inks—and he took the tack out of his mouth—to that gentleman there.

The conversation now became more general. International affairs were discussed *in extenso*; "that gentleman there" generally settling the matter.

But who is this coming up from Dudley? said Austin.

Why it's in the *Herald* there this evening. Didn't you see the *Herald*?

No.

In fact "that gentleman there" had occupied it for two hours and a half.

Why that damned lawyer fellow, they say is coming up. There, there, Pat. The fore part knife and the scraper, Pat, can't ye see. That, that fellow in the House there, that trimmer. He's afraid of his own constituency this time after turning round on the Home Rule tack. Damn him!—Hammer in that last, Pat.—That—O what's his name, Sam?

Neville.

What! cried Austin. Excuse me a moment, Sam, and he took the paper and read the notice that Mr. M. Neville, the popular member for Dudley West, had in order to meet the wishes of his party decided to undertake the task of winning back Burleigh, &c., &c.

A conversation between Mr. M. Neville and Dr. Charlwood over their wine one evening had led up to this new move.

Well you see now how the matter stands, Mr. Neville had said.

Faith then, I'm not quite clear on that point yet.

Well but they'll never take that Education Bill, don't you see. Duffy's dead against it and all the Catholic party, don't you see? And the country means to have it. Smith's little wirepulling surprised himself and now he must go on.

So far so good.

Well it was the Irish racket I got in on last time, and the game's played out there now.

You're a good 'un. Ah, that stuff can't be beat. Some I got from the Boree vineyards. Yes, sir—when the Phylloxera's burst—

Well then I'm going in for Burleigh on the Anti-Irish ticket this trip.

That's a moral, said the Doctor, smacking his lips and meditating his "potentialities of growing rich," a favourite discourse, when the Phylloxera would finally have burst up, we believe it was, the vineyards of France.

We put the other coves out, continued Mr. Neville familiarly, and then we're the boss-cockies.

Good.

Well that means portfolios, eh? And Attorney-General falls to your humble servant, eh?

Grand. You're a cute 'un — tut — tut there's not a headache in a gallon of it.

The election took place during Austin's vacation.

There were three candidates in the field. Neville as Conservative supported by the Church of England Party, Murphy supported by the Catholics, and Jones, on the Liberal ticket, the champion of the Wesleyans.

Murphy was "ignorant as the pigs of Drogheda" as Mr. Neville himself put it. Jones was a rather wretched little being, who talked much inflammatory language on the platform, and kissed all the babies in the constituency, thereby hoping to secure a seat. And Mr. Neville was—Mr. Neville.

Therefore the recording a vote might have been a question of delicate consideration if these considerations entered into it at all. But they did not; the election turned on the religious question. They slandered each

other with much zeal and an unsophisticated person might have observed curiously that their guides were not in general the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew Brandt had no difficulty in forming his decision. Murphy was the champion of the Church that was founded on a Rock. That was enough. Murphy's character was "shady;" Matthew Brandt was a man of high integrity. Murphy's manners were on a par with his morals; Matthew Brandt was stern in dignity as in honour. He took Murphy to his bosom, gave him the weight of all his name and influence, and canvassed hard for him, pen and voice.

The bone of contention was the Education Act. Matthew Brandt had hailed it. It would bring a new era into our national life!

Cardinal Barry condemned it. It smelt of danger to the Hierarchy. That was enough. Matthew Brandt and Murphy worked together and their battle cry meant death to Education. Murphy was champion of the Pope's infallibility. That was enough.

Austin groaned inwardly. Murphy and the Bishop of Gresham dined frequently at the house. The youngster refused to meet them.

What ! cried Matthew Brandt not the man to brook disobedience in a son.

Austin's eye flashed as he looked up. I will leave the house rather ! he said.

Matthew Brandt was deeply struck. He walked silently out of the room.

Austin, what have you said ? and his mother took his hand.

The tears gushed to his eyes. He turned his head and walked in silence away.

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Every night the pros and cons of the election were talked over by the townspeople who used to lounge into Jack Clancy's shop. From the starting point of politico-economical interests, the issue would often run a wonderful course. Once it was a hotly contested battle as to whether Ned Hanlan was the greatest oarsman of the world, and once as to who had the worst of it in the end, Tom Sayers or Heenan ? Mr. Neville's speech was

the occasion of some disturbance. His aim was to make it an anti-Irish question.

What have we ever got from Ireland but disloyalty, unthankfulness, crime, assassination, and affrays? The leaders are a crowd of adventurers living on the corruption of the country they have ruined. They must agitate to keep themselves before the eyes of those they are hounding on to crime. Agitation is the trade they live by. Ireland has too long impeded the progress of a much enduring Empire. She must be squelched—

Jack Clancy had listened to these words with open mouth, and with his eyes ready to jump out of his head.

D'ye hear him, Sam! D'ye hear it! D'ye hear what he says dthere—the lying — sweep — the d—d — d—d —d —d — Jack boggled a little in speech but his look was more than eloquence.

Parnell's a better man than ever you or the likes of you was, you dirty spalpeen! cried Sam.

Great confusion.

This start was all that Sam wanted.

A disturbance was brewing and Sam began to sniff it as the war horse does the battle afar off.

You paltry — presumptuous — whipper-snapper—you—you—pragmatical—Jackdaw—you pragmatical Jackdaw !

This last word had come to Sam by a happy inspiration.

He had read it once in his little girl's third book of lessons. The "pragmatical" created great consternation.

Uproar.

Cries of Sit down ! Put him out ! Take off your boots, or else you'll wake the baby ! Order ! Gentlemen ! Gentlemen ! Out with him ! were heard all over the house, while the "Irish party" were becoming furious. Sam was the wrong man to be put out. A little of that was what his soul panted for. The people who vociferously advised this course were not personally active.

Mr. Neville saw through the affair in a twinkling.

Would the gentleman have the goodness to come up on the stage ?

He was very bland. He would be only too happy to give him the opportunity of addressing the audience.

Go up, Sam, nudged Jack, with no manner of doubt but that "that gentleman there" would settle Mr. N. for ever.

In a rash moment Sam mounted the stage. He had now to address the audience.

Ladies and gentlemen !

A roar of laughter.

That's a good 'un, Sam ! Your mind's allus on the ladies, Sam !

Fellow men—tried Sam again—women and children, shouted out a voice and the crowd once set going laughed immoderately.

But Sam was not to be beaten. He had his point.

Fellow workmen—(laughter), I hold in my hand a piece of paper. And a cutting from a newspaper really fluttered at the ends of his fingers. (Immense laughter.)

I hold in my hand a bit of paper, shouted Sam furiously.

We see it, Sam. Hear, hear, Sam. Is it bankpaper, Sam ?

The crowd were ready to explode at anything.

Ye blackguards, roared Sam, I hold in my hand a bit of p-a-a-per !

Inexhaustible laughter.

Jack Clancy beheld his chum's distress and rushed up on to the stage. Why, no one knew. He didn't know himself. He felt he wanted movement. So did Sam, and they stood there both furiously red in the face.

Austin was convulsed with laughter and Jack Clancy caught sight of him holding his hands before his face.

Austin Brandt ! he roared out, are ye a man to sit there and listen to this. An' yer old chums doing their best, the blackguards. Come up here wid ye ! Come up and talk to them.

Go, urged old Ben who sat next to him.

Is my father here ? whispered Austin.

No. Go up and speak !

The eyes of the people were turned on Austin. He felt it without looking up and shaking his head fiercely to tune up his

brains he suddenly stood up and walked calmly up the centre looking neither to right nor left, and to Mr. Neville's complete astonishment ascended the stage. What he was going to say he had not the remotest idea.

Read that to them, cried out Sam putting the newspaper cutting in his hand.

That was very lucky. He saw what it was at a glance, viz., one of Mr. Neville's own speeches, and with a grave aspect that kept the audience in expectation, began —

Mr. Chubb assured you lately I believe that he held in his hand a bit of paper, (Great laughter Sam joining in with all), and truly there was much reason for Mr. Chubb's emphasis.

He spoke to the point and commenced to quote Mr. Neville from Sam's bit of paper. Mr. Neville was mad with rage. He advanced, however, with all his florid suavity. His forbearance had been exercised, he said, in giving Mr. Chubb the privilege of speaking, but surely it was not to be expected — Hisses, howls, uproar! Sam Chubb shaking

his fist, and Jack Clancy bellowing like a bull, and half the audience standing up and the other half yelling, Order! Hist! Silence! Let's hear him!

Austin looked at Mr. Neville, thinking of the crushing down doctrine, and fluttered, before the eyes of the audience, Sam's famous "bit of paper." Jack looked at the "pragmatical Jackdaw" and shook his fist at him, and Sam strutted round the stage in the same style that some of the old identities had seen him in the Ring of the old Gold-Pocket Theatre when he boxed the Dog-Trap Pet, and knocked him out.

Is there no policeman in the room? shouted Mr. Neville. All the audience were now yelling, Hear him! Hurrah, Austin! Good boy, Sam! Don't wake the baby! Down with the rake hellies! Order! Boo hoo!

The word policeman gave the last touch to Jack Clancy.

All true patriots stand by! he roared.

In an instant pell mell over seats and men there was a hurry skurry for the stage. Mr.

Neville retreated and finally made his escape by the back door under cover of the darkness for most of the crowd were ready to belabour him. Austin waited to see what would become of the disturbance. Half the audience were already fighting. Some tried to take him on their shoulders, while he ran round to the back of the stage, laughing. The Chairman feeling that he ought to do something and not knowing exactly what, kept crying aloud in his desperation, Put out the lights ! Put out the lights !

Austin slipped out and could only in wild imagination conjecture the tumult that was thundering within in the darkness.

Next day Sam Chubb the hero of many a rough and tumble assured him with immense laughter and much internal sober fact that it was something terrible ! Something—*terrible*.

Ah ! sighed Jack, when he recovered breath.

Actshally ! repeated Sam.

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Matthew Brandt had been seriously dis-

pleased with Austin, and this unseemly uproar increased not a little his discomfort. And himself fallen from his high estate, Austin brooded over the injustice, the hypocrisy, vileness, that he seemed to behold everywhere rampant.

The election resulted in favour of Mr. Neville by a small majority. Jones was second, Murphy, with the Catholic vote solid, close up.

Murphy was the idol of his party, and some of his speeches were perfect gems, especially the last. He was a jolly, good natured fellow, but for this once, and only this once, he was dignified, impressive !

We are now a fourth of the community, he cried, and held his hand aloft to retard for a moment the storm of applause. Yes, we are now one-fourth of the community,—but plaze God, plaze God, we'll soon be a fifth !

Who are you going to vote for, Tim ? Austin asked an old acquaintance of his whom he met in a remote district one day when out riding.

Arrah, an' who would I vote for but Pat Murphy?

But he is not in your constituency this time, Tim!

The divil a bit will that shtop me; they tells me not to be listening to a thing at all, at all, what people does be saying. Arrah, an' who would I vote for but Pat Murphy!

That some of these people cannot move mountains is but a proof of the limitations of the power of Faith.

Beer had flowed like water for the benefit of the free and independent electors. Mr. Neville had flung gold broadcast, and the others meditated a petition against him on the score of bribery.

It's the pot calling the kettle black, said Mr. Neville to the Doctor, and a man can pay his own price for services rendered.

To be sure, said the Doctor, dropping in a lump of sugar.

My dear Doctor, continued Mr. Neville, the whole business is a farce. What can men slogging away with picks all day or splitting timber, or pushing barrows, know about ques-

tions of taxation or complicated points of Government! You don't bring your watch to a blacksmith to mend for you, and you don't submit yourself to a conclave of cobblers if your liver's out of order.

We can't cobble them ourselves, said the Doctor.

Well then, we come and spout on intricate questions of politics, that perhaps two or three men in the House have any proper grasp of at all, to a room full of clowns ready to swallow anything you give them. Well, I talk bunkum to them. If they want that they can have it. I'll talk sense to them if they like but they don't. I'll talk anything you please to them. If they're satisfied that's their business, not mine.

Did you ever hear these men talking about Free Trade and Protection. Egad, it 'ud make you laugh. There are not two men in the House talk sense about it. There's Stirling there has the whole business off pat from his Mill and his Adam Smith, and his Walker and Cairns, and what not, that a man wants a supersublimated brain to get hold

of; but it's the particular points and conditions of trade and commerce and practical politics that come in, and I can knock holes into everything he says. The argument is only a little bout of sparring to "show form." The real question with me is, how many guns does it carry? That's the secret of my good temper in the House. Manhood suffrage is a farce on the face of it. If the people elected delegates out of small communities and these formed an electing body, and so on, that might be right enough. Bill Stubbings is as dark as Erebus on the pros and cons of the conversion of Govt. stock, but on the whole he'll name you pretty clearly the most intelligent man in his district, and this next fellow'll have a wider range.

Government by a full chamber is another farce. Legislation is one thing and administration another thing, and legislation is just as technical a business as the other—as technical as that doctoring of yours and a damn'd sight harder to tinker. Would you call me in if you had a touch of colic?

No. I have great respect for your logical

mind but there's the little point of fact you're weak in.

That's it. Neither would I take your opinion for a rap in anything involving legal issues. It's a farce. Commissions help the matter, but we want it systematized. Always pulling the strings of legislation is a farce. Ousting your Minister of Justice because Public Works has overshot his estimates or Treasurer made a blunder, is a farce.

General elections with a dozen mixed issues and the country in a ferment is a farce.

Government by party is a farce.

The debates in the House are a farce.

The whole business is a farce!

You're talking revolutionary now, said the Doctor as he watched with satisfaction the other drain his toddy glass, and quietly stirred his own. What do you propose?

Nothing. I'm satisfied. I've got that portfolio in my paw. That'll do me for the present. If a man wanted to help them they'd hound him down, as they did when Johnson brought in his Norwegian reform.

You can't do anything for them. The Angel Gabriel couldn't better them. They'd pull him off the platform. They want Smith to tell them he'll make a paradise for them if they only put him in. Do you think he cared a damn about the Education Act? not he. That's our wedge to give Duffy his congé.

CHAPTER XXVI.

AUSTIN perhaps was glad to get back to Dudley. None of the others had yet returned to Richmond House.

Gillie was not to be expected. Poor Gillie. It was on the occasion of his birthday. Gills, on this day, happy, buoyant, amiable, naif, docile had opened his heart to Joseph. They were alone in the room.

Joseph, he said, Joseph — how does it feel— It should be said that Joseph had been much displeased with Gills of late.— How does it feel, Joseph, how does it feel— when you are going to be a man?! . . . Poor Gillie. He was crestfallen. He entered his own room, looked at his wretched countenance in the glass, then threw himself on his bed. He wept. Ah, Joseph, Joseph.

You have never known the fidelity that I have had for you ! Joseph, I can still look up to you. Yes, Joseph, I can admire you more than ever ! but, Joseph,—I can never feel the same to you again !

In place of Gillie, however, a new inmate had arrived, a former acquaintance. Lacy was a rather notable character : Then about twenty-eight, a law student in his third year, with no achievement in the University records, yet a man of the liveliest spirit. He had passed through an engineering course in Dublin, had spent here some years in field surveying, but had found no outlet for his restless and fiery mind.

In person he was tall, well built, robust, ruddy in appearance, with bold black eyes, and crisp black hair ; his features well-marked but regular—a fine type, handsome and strong. An artist faithful to the outlines might have given them the peculiar air of refinement. They had not that, however. There was too much the look of animal health. One would say, perhaps—a farmer's son (as he was), a fine, happy, handsome,

genial fellow with his manly figure and the eyes of a Jovian bull—but still not a man brought up on spoon meat.

He and Austin were friends at once. They had much in common, much in contrast.

Lacy's robust figure diminished Austin's frame, yet there was in the youngster a carriage and a steeliness that Lacy somewhat lacked, and his countenance in comparison with that of the impulsive Irishman looked patient and resolute.

Lacy's father was an Irishman, his mother a lady from Warsaw. He himself was a furious Home Ruler, a Catholic by profession, an infidel by conviction, enthusiastic in everything. And there was one subject on which he was accustomed to talk with more than ordinary vehemence—The poet Shelley. Shelley was the God of his pantheon.

Have you read him? he exclaimed to Austin, in their first conversation.

No, I have read scraps here and there—The Sensitive Plant. Very beautiful. The Skylark incredibly good, and a few others.

Brandt, said the other solemnly, you have not lived.

To be sure, said Austin laughingly, not in any essential way yet. I am preparing for that and I see a long foreground, and Heaven only knows in what measure I will be able to pull through at length. But let me try to explain to you. I read poetry with a peculiar pleasure but never without a certain feeling of dissatisfaction. I say this is beautiful. It has beguiled the hour with sweet dreams, and made this resting place more or less pleasant. But I cry, I do not want to be beguiled. I want to see life as it is with my eyes open. I do not want these pictures, excitements. Nay rather seriously I think I should check in myself, not encourage, these desires, for my own wretched mind is always running away on pictures when it ought to be at honest toil.

What poets have you read?

Most of them. John Milton. His *L'Allegro* gives me the very fields of English scenery. At least I presume so. But did ever a man read through *Paradise Lost*? I have learnt

many passages off by heart. The images are magnificent, the diction magniloquent, the conception grand, stately, gigantic, and—

Go on.

Well, Jimmy Thomson, a splendid fellow. The fat of the Land somebody has said, and not badly I think. And Goldsmith. His Vicar of Wakefield tastes of green fields. And Pope, and John Dryden, and Burns, with those love songs of his—Damn him.

Lacy laughed at this turn.

I see Burns had hit you somewhere—but on the whole you are cold.

Not so. I feel with them all to the full as I read. But where is the man who has struggled from darkness up to light, has spoken out from the depths of his heart, whose life has been his poetry, the words the portraiture, the struggling interpretation, whose tones, though ringing with the very genius of his poet-nature, break from him with the natural impulse of a cry?

Well, Byron?

Yes, Byron, full of startling and original thoughts, beautiful flashes of ideas, great

and vivid with passion. One is swept away with his Corsairs, and his Giaours, and his Laras; with all the gilt, the glamour, theatrical bombast, opera bouffe. Take Manfred, this is nearer. Grand, with masterful strokes of expression. The central idea is false; all that makes it a drama is weak, factitious, the greater part mere rhapsody. Don Juan is the only one that seems to me—sincere—and that—

You're the man I want, cried Lacy. You haven't lived, I'll give you *Shelley! Shelley!* His touch is electrical. It's more than poetry. It's a revelation. It's a religion. The name Shelley is a spell. Ah, you do not know what that is yet. I could love the man who loves Shelley. To know him is a brotherhood.

Lacy and Austin were drawn closer and closer. They talked politics, they talked religion, and they talked interminably now of Shelley. The whole summer evenings they used to walk together. These evenings were radiant it seemed. Strolling in the gardens along the banks of the Yarra, with

the stars reflected in the placid waters at their feet, taking long walks out to the sea, wandering along its margin and gazing into the fulness of its waters under the sheen of the moon's light, their words were as free as their thoughts. Austin was being perpetually astonished at the singular contradictions in Lacy's character. He had a passionate admiration for greatness of every kind, yet he seemed content to let it rest at that and to be nothing more than a feeling. He could recite Shelley by the hour for he knew him off by heart, or play cards in a tavern all night. He appreciated with devotional intensity the finest and chastest feelings of Wordsworth's nature worship, but his own course of life was not likely to flow in a very pellucid stream for his love of women made the whole caste of his mind erotic. The characters he admired were those of high purpose and strength, and he was susceptible on every side to the temptations of pleasures of the sense.

Austin introduced him to Mrs. Charlwood, and that lady was charmed.

Mrs. Neville too and Lacy had much to talk about. He had a considerable knowledge of music and excellent taste, it appeared.

Lacy sang too—a round voice, rather rough to be sure, but as Austin declared with delight, vigorous.

You're one of the few men one cares to listen to, he said. "The Tenor's voice was spoilt by affectation, as for the Bass, the beast could only bellow." You have no voice Lacy, old fellow, but what you have has at least a ring that is manly.

CHAPTER XXVII.

AUSTIN, said Lacy—it was a soft mood of reverie—I scarcely know whether on the whole I derive more pleasure or pain from poetry.

They had been walking in the cool evening and now had sat down on a little bench in the Fitzroy Gardens. It was a fine avenue between irregular rows of elms. The stillness of the night, the dim light, mellow and limpid, the half discovered vistas were full of subtle influence. The mind moved without effort, mused, wandered in a dream. Then all at once with laughter and the clear voices of silver a troop of school children, a bevy of little girls dressed in white, broke into the scene. Their voices and laughter could be heard long after they had vanished

from sight. These were followed by a Saracen and a Chinese Mandarin going to a fancy dress ball. Then after a long interval a woman with a red shawl thrown as a hood over her head passed by. She marched slowly but with a strong step. She was a daughter of the people. Her countenance looked beautiful in the half-light, dark, grave, even sombre. Then nothing was visible but beyond the park, the lights of the city, where the buildings and streets were like shadows or clouds, fantastic and large. The silence had been long unbroken, save by the faint sound of a flute, so distant that it was half unheard, with its melody that just fell within the ear. Truly one of a thousand and one nights.

Lacy was half reclined smoking a cigar and watching the smoke wreath. Austin smiled, looking at him.

Yes, continued Lacy. I read with delight, and have felt how exquisite the hour. Each particular thought moves me with its native impulse and my mind sweeps along the whole diapason.

Man ! Oh, not men ! Man, the harmonious soul of
many a soul,
Whose nature is its own divine control,
Whence all things flow to all,
As rivers to the sea.

How great the compass, the harmony of
that.

Familiar acts are beautiful from love.

The simple line. Familiar acts are beautiful from love. I have often a foolish sort of thought to wish I could have known Shelley, to have once grasped him by the hand, to have once looked into his eyes, to have kissed his forehead once.

Our lives are myriad in this way, he continued ; affections, ideas, impulses, swayings, excitements of the mind all in a brief hour. There is the "burthen of the mystery" everywhere. And then again look at it in another way, the same brief little doings, the few fleeting years, and we fade away as if we had never been.

Austin had not heard the last words.

I wonder who that lady is he said, by Jove she's beautiful.

Where ? I see two.

Yes, but the one with the veil ; it conceals her features, but see the grace of the figure and the carriage, and her manner. There's something about her tells me she is very beautiful. She looked at me as she passed.

Possibly, said Lacy laughing.

Yes, but there's something not right there. She's in some trouble I know. Ah, see her coming back.

The ladies passed again, and their agitation was very apparent.

Austin rose and walked calmly over, and looking at his countenance they could not think him impudent. It could scarcely be concealed he said that they were in some distress. There were situations in which bounds of politeness might be overstepped. Could he serve them? He would stand to their command. If not would they excuse a rudeness that a strange sort of interest in their perplexity had caused?

They stood looking at each other. He raised his hat and was turning away.

No, no, said the unveiled one, you might really help us. But how can we speak.

They looked at each other, confused ; but at last the veiled lady spoke.

Tell him, she said, and began to weep.

The story was a simple one, and the lady came to the point. She explained that they had occasion to have long suspected the fidelity of the husband of her friend. That even now she believed they had surprised him in an assignation. See that bench near the lamp. He is sitting there with that woman. At least we think it is he. We dreaded to go near, lest he should also see us, and now we do not know what to do.

Here was an adventure.

Well ? said Austin.

The two ladies retired to consult. At length they came forward. The unveiled one explained that it was a desperate thing but they proposed to change cloaks and hats for disguise and her friend might then take Austin's arm and pass close to the place.

She could at least satisfy her mind of a doubt that was killing her.

Yes do it. The exchange was made, the ladies reappeared and Austin and the veiled

beauty (as he now was certain she must be) passed and repassed the lamp.

No, it was not her husband, she declared.

You have rendered me a strange service. What you think of me I am afraid to guess, but I beg still more—that you make no attempt to discover me or question me further about this wretched business.

Her voice was low and as he thought very sweet. This wretched gauze that a touch might for a moment turn aside! It was tempting. I will not seek to penetrate your secret, he said.

On your honour.

I have given you my word. Go at once. I will not look even to see the direction you take.

Austin and Lacy shut their eyes very determinedly and when they opened them again there was no trace of the fair ones to be seen.

His relations with Mrs. Neville had long been irksome to him. This adventure now occupied his thoughts; but by no means restrained his fickleness.

He was living in a wasteful excitement, the futile emotional storms, the sad march of the libertine.

It was some time after this event that Austin and Lacy were sitting together at an organ recital. The music was classical.

Austin, said Lacy during an interval. You have two serious defects of character. Austin's guilty mind smote him.

Well ?

You do not love flowers and you do not understand music.

Pooh. I would willingly say, let there be flowers. I would have banks of violets, beds of mignonette running wild, a little wilderness of hawthorn, heather and musk rose, a hedge of baronia to lade the wind with perfume. Were I building my pleasure palace, I would have these to give me a half unconscious solacement as I meditated other things, but life is too short to brood upon flowers.

John Keats said one of the most exquisite pleasures in life to him was watching a rose unfolding. Lacy heaved a sigh. Ah Austin

said he there's a world in this music ; there's not a feeling in our minds that music will not respond to. There's soul in it. Grandeur too and greatness. I was running over in my mind Beethoven's Sonata in E flat.

Beautiful, said Austin.

What?

Beautiful ! cried Austin.

What?

She ! Look, that lady there. Did you ever see a face so beautiful ?

Lacy looked. Kate Shand the actress, he said, yes she is beautiful.

I've seen her before, said Austin deeply.

Possibly.

But, where ? Where ? I wonder, I'd know that face for ever again.

A lady came in now and took the seat beside her. It was the unveiled one !

The same figure, the same carriage, 'tis she.

* * * * *

Kate Shand the actress. Night after night he used to sit in the theatre—delighted, fascinated—but as in a dream, elusive,

escaping from the clutch. When, at the last, she used to stand in advance of all, near the footlights he used to hang upon those eyes of hers, those bright suspended orbs!—the curtain dropped and he started then from the deep hypnotic spell.

It was Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, and Kate was Rosalind, a combination to linger in the memory. It became famous. Not alone Kate's beauty, but the brilliancy of style, won for her every heart. The form clothed in rich vestments was perfect in its symmetry, sculptured with a liberal but powerful hand. In repose confident but well-contained, in movement easy, natural, and almost strangely delightful.—But it was not Rosalind. That soft seductive languor had a lower fount than the grace of Shakespeare's Rosalind. The voice was mellow, arch, and winning; but that of Rosalind is as natural and fresh as the singing of birds in spring time; the actress was alluring, seductive—the mask was of a clever woman, a beauty, a plaything.

His pulse was beating as he looked up

with some confusion to her face; but she was by no means the sentimental fool that he thought. Rather she seemed to wish to atone for former weakness, and mocked very much at anything that even savoured of tender feeling, and showed herself anxious to be considered a woman very much of the world.

This acquaintance grew rapidly. Then she rebuffed him and held him in check. She talked of love and teased him.

Austin, you are a mere boy, but you will find flirtation a very pretty pastime. It is better than salmon fishing. You hook your victim with the tempting bait of love, and then play him as you will. Let him feel the gentle tug, give him free line; then after he has fairly exhausted himself in his struggles, haul him in; and so the game goes on. And then when you have thrown him into your basket that's finished, and you look out for other sport.

Very pretty, he said, and I am the fish? You are playing me nicely, are you not? How far have you got me? Am I nearly

exhausted in my struggles? And when will you begin to haul me in to your basket?

These contests, collisions of feelings and will, this sport, he was beginning to like. Nay, if you but think of it—the seduction of women was the game *par excellence* for the youths of this gentle time. The literature of flippant genius is pretty large, and no small part of it witty. It was the daily change of most of those whom he met, though to be sure with a good deal of the wit not on the face of it obvious. However it passed very well, for the point was more or less obvious and the wit not particularly missed. Lord Byron who wrote much to please the sex has assured us of the universal levity of women and the De Mussets or the Balzacs give no better account.

Pooh. It was a mere contest for supremacy. He would either be salmon or angler. He would be angler then, so the contest grew hotter and hotter, and their light raillery struck upon rather serious faces.

You're in love with me, he said suddenly to her one day.

She was holding a globe with gold fish in her hands at the time.

It dropped with a crash. See what you have done! What was it that you said? Oh! I'm in love with you, am I? That's very interesting, and—it's I am the salmon then! Now Austin, be tender at least. Ha. Ha. I like that very much.

Do not laugh. Your manner changes when you hear my step, and when I speak your eye glistens. You are sometimes pale, sometimes red. It tantalizes you that these arrowy things of yours do not sting me. And yet you would weep salt tears if you hurt me, Kate, wouldn't you?

I do not study you so much. Perhaps you think it is in your power or your will or something of the sort, that hardness and bitterness of yours that—will never give one their due,—will never say anything—I hate you!

Foolish Kate. The footlights have made you a something less precious. Your life has become a tawdry play tinselled. A world of *éclat* and spangles has fretted on your

vanities. Your brilliant cavaliers have been imbeciles, the drones of an inept hour. They have flattered your caprices, and every silly fancy has been a *jeu d'esprit*, till even you have found that cloy. And these have been your triumphs. And you have been unsatisfied, while still sated. For the woman is inferior to the man. She knows it in her heart. She despises him who beflatters her, she adores him who binds her to his will. With the one she is a giddy fool, and still lost; with the other she feels that the hand than can crush her can hold her; and, behold, pretty Kate, all her native qualities of grace, seduction, charm, spring out. This is not a high standard. Nevertheless it is the standard that she has made for herself. It is not in supporting the man in the hours of his higher endeavours that woman finds her mission. No. It is in a lower tone, the delightful tentatives of grace, the incense of a mollient sensuality. Behold her costume. Kate flung herself furiously on the sofa, covering her shoulders with a rug. It is the woman who is the athlete! Life, why is it

not a perpetual Pythian feast! Ha, my pretty Greek. . . . He continued to speak with calm voice, striking down to the very depths of her nature. Kate felt the words like a whip. It was as the racehorse feels the steel, the soul the goad of its pride, the poet his access of feeling,—and fervent desires their impulse, the wild leap beyond the power of the will.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

To see Kate at her own house too frequently was a matter of some embarrassment, for she was sincerely desirous of being, like Cæsar's wife, above suspicion; therefore Austin arranged to invite her to supper and selected for the purpose a place that had an excellent reputation among the gilded youths of the day. Pleasantly situated, surrounded by a garden, with two great poplar trees at the gate, which completely sheltered the approach, Llandeilo House was secluded and quiet as a cloister.

Austin was admitted by a lady whose age he could not even approximately guess. She might have been forty, she might have been sixty. A round little figure well preserved, florid cheeks, streaks of powder, a rather

fantastic way of doing the hair, large dragging eyes, the outlines of good features, but the peculiar character as of a woman, profligate, utterly.

He looked around the room. The furniture was rich, certainly, but showy and profuse. There were, however, some remarkably good pictures on the walls, principally choice little touches of landscape, a copy of Sir Frederick Leighton's "Wedded," and a beautiful engraving of one of Rubens' Crucifixions.

Austin naturally enough perhaps began to feel a certain difficulty at the beginning of this interview, but Mrs. Eddy was one of the most amiably mannered persons in the world and soon set him at ease.

And so, Dolly, you would like to have the judgment of a lady friend upon the piano.

Oh, was the explanation, you know, Dolly, we never by any chance sell a bottle of wine in Llandeilo House, for that is contrary to the law, you must recollect. At least, she said laughing, I've been assured so by gentlemen who have every reason to know who have

come here to supper ; and therefore I always put the matter in some such delicate way.

Oh ! . . . You are discreet.

Yes, that's the way. We are beautifully secluded here are we not, Dolly ? Quite a retreat, and with those shady trees that protect the gate the house may be said to be embosomed in foliage. A love bower—quite sylvan. All my friends think that's a very nice idea. . . .

Ah, ah, ah. It's a weary life ! I'm five years older than the Queen, Dolly. Tra la la la la la, she trilled, la la la tra la la la la la, and her voice ran up and down the scale with the greatest freedom as she beat time with her hands and swayed jauntily about.

That's Ernani ! Oh, how I love the Opera. It is so refined, so exquisite a pleasure. Tra la la Tra la. Hear me, Norma ! romde romda ! la la ra de ra ! and puffing out her cheeks and with melodramatic air she gave him a sample of her tragic.

Five years older than the Queen, you're not really serious ?

Ah, yes I am though but they all tell me

that I keep my years so well. It's the figure, my Beauty, the figure that does it. You see, I don't drink. It's the drink that plays ducks and drakes with them all. A glass of champagne now and then, a little delicate *Chateau Lafitte* is very good ; but it's the nip, nip, nip, all day long,—men and women too, nip, nip, nip.

No doubt, and do you know many nice people ?

Ah, I know them of all sorts. Youth will have its day ; but I know a good few too that are no longer young. And some of them I like best. I like to see some refinement in the features you know. The *Je ne sais quoi*. I like to see a lady gentle and lady-like and nice in manner. I know one that it is quite a treat to hear her talk, she is so sweet spoken and always has a smile when she meets you. Ah ! Mrs. Eddy she says, I always do admire your taste and tact. You keep things always so elegant and proper.

Ah ? And how old is she ?

Now, let me see, fifty perhaps, but it's

hard to tell her age, her figure is slight, rather thin, and the complexion rather sallow. Ah ! but to see her walk, Doll ! to see her walk ! to see how graceful she does things, and to hear her play ! O Doll, Doll, Doll. But now I mustn't be saying anything more about her or you'll be asking who she is ? And I'm a sphinx ! Doll ! I'm a sphinx !

And she closed her mouth and marched with much humour up and down the room.

Ha, ha, ha — oh, the tinkers, said she laughing. I know them all and I smile to myself as I pass them in Collins' Street. It's a queer old fantasia Doll, my boy, this life of ours. Isn't it ? . . . O dear, O dear. I'm heart-broken, Doll, alone in the world.

Had you no family then ?

Why bless you yes, two girls.

Dead ?

Dead ! God save you, no, they're both alive.

Austin looked a little puzzled.

I had them brought up in a convent in —, she explained, and used to take a trip there once a year to see them. They were

both beautifully accomplished, and the Marist brothers used to say to me, We do admire you, Mrs. Eddy, for the training you have given your daughters. The eldest one, Nora, insisted on taking the veil in spite of everything I could say. It was of no use, and so she is a nun now.

A nun !

Yes. A nun.

And the other ?

Ah, she was my pet—Pauline. After leaving the convent she went for a visit to some friends of hers, and married there Delaroux, a scampish fellow, an actor. . . . I spoke hastily, and she took me too seriously. Where she is now I don't know. Ah, it breaks my heart. It has—broken—my—heart.

H'm . . .

One of the Marist brothers, Dolly, stayed here two days. I managed nicely. We had plenty too to talk about, the girls and so on. He gave me this book ; and she showed him a beautifully bound Douay Bible.

A knock was heard outside. She rose to go.

Close the door, called Austin.

Pooh, Dolly, are you afraid of our conversation being interrupted. We're as safe here as if we were in Newgate!

There was a whispering at the door. Presently she returned.

I must go now, said Austin, nine o'clock on Wednesday.

Ah, Dolly, you're a jewel, and what I would do for you I'd do for no one else. *Au revoir. Au revoir.*

* * * * *

Austin meanwhile had not seen Mrs. Neville for a long time. Attributing this to the wrath of her husband in the matter of the elections, she had sought to make appointments with him; these he evaded.

She felt herself despised by him; degraded to herself. There is a feeling of dignity in moral worth that makes defeat a victory, that makes the bare hut which shelters the persecuted from the winds of Heaven more glorious than a temple. There is a dignity that erects the soul; that makes it free,

strong, nay, under suffering, cheerful; that seems to be impressed too upon the physical form; that in the invisible ways that we must tread seems to bring with it an atmosphere, a Presence, that others too are dimly conscious of. These things she felt she had understood once.

Now she felt shrunken, mean, a thing to endure insults. Her spirit could not rise in protest. The bitterness of grief was none the less. She reclined on her sofa, and listlessly beat her foot upon the floor.

At other times, other moods. She paced the room. She approached the mirror and deliberately and closely regarded herself. The past few months had changed her much. The eye was sad. On the forehead were the irradicable marks of suffering. The cheek had lost its soft contour, its bloom. The whole face—the delightful atmosphere of her youth, the radiance of health had vanished. She looked attentively, determinedly. The beauty of the woman was fading. With a peculiar quietness she returned to her sofa and sat half reclining, her eyes looking for-

ward, looking at nothing. Her youth was disappearing. She taxed herself as though with a sort of hate. The hollowness of her life—she pointed at it with bitterness. The years of suffering, the years of noble fortitude were almost a reproach, a delusion. Her life was deceived. She trembled, approaching the days of her encounter with Austin, the kisses illicit. By what chain did she hold him now?—Her life was slipping away. Her mind rose in tumult. The years of her fortitude, womanly courage, her suffering—these were flung into the stream of her ragings. Wherefore this life!—a hollow Entsagen, a desert. Grief, the haggard parasite, was eating up her life. No! No! Austin and she. . . .

* * * * *

It was a billet from Austin, asking to meet him at Llandeilo House on Wednesday night. The writing was not his. He had disguised it, she guessed.

A curious struggle her feelings may have at this moment undergone. . . . Prudence, not fickleness had led to his neglect!—She

jumped at that thought. . . . And then—the next step to a lower degradation.

I am bad enough, Heaven knows, she cried, I cannot now be nice about the ways and the means.

How to avoid suspicion. . . . Still further confidences, still more abject confessions. She did everything mechanically, noticing every detail, even attentively, but as one who had only a far-off interest in it all. She dressed with care, wore a dress *décolleté*, a beautiful blue silk gown, and took with her a long white veil. The lady was shown to a room. Looking round she observed a sort of little chamber or alcove partitioned off by heavy curtains of red rich velvet meeting at the centre. She would hide behind this.

His step was heard. For a little while he seemed to stand puzzled at the door, seeing no one. Then the curtains divided, and she stopped for a moment, her head bent down—the long white veil covering her,—then she swept it daintily aside, with a flash in the eyes, looked up and met—Lacy!

Lacy stepped audaciously forward, a well

turned compliment an effusive explanation on his lips, while she stood panting there.

Back! Back! Cowardly wretch! Touch me at your peril! Dastard!

Her face was white. She heaved and swayed in a tempest.

Springing to the door he turned and slunk away.

Meanwhile another drama was being played close by.

Austin and the "Divine Kate" arrived at the appointed hour, she deeply veiled. The gate was unfastened. He stood with his hand upon the latch. She trembled, pulled his hand impulsively.

Oh come away—there is yet time. He pressed the latch, they entered and passed quickly to their parlour.

You tremble, foolish girl, said he, pooh. There's no fear. This place is secrecy itself—and the eyes of Argus could not penetrate that veil. Here, let me remove it. Kiss me and still your silly fears.

Ah! now, that's better, and he smoothed her hair.

What ! you tremble still, and turn your head away, and—what's this, tears too. Look up and kiss me again. He took her hands. What ! No ?

Oh leave me, leave now. Go.

He smiled. Why, Kate, this pretty art becomes you. You have prepared your part to give the play a piquancy. He passed his arm around her waist and bent his head to kiss her.

No, no, she cried and struggled suddenly and freed herself and flung herself or fell upon the floor, and throwing her arms over a chair buried her face and sobbed convulsively.

What is this then ! Tell me, plainly. Speak !

She did not answer. He bent down again, seized her round the waist, with main force set her on her feet. Speak !

Leave me, leave me. It has come to this. I have played with this wretchedness till it has entrapped me now. I said to myself I could resist and toyed with this temptation, and now, scarcely knowing how, I have been swept away to this. Heaven forgive me, I

have never wished it so. Austin, oh Austin. I have been a good woman ever hitherto, do not wrong me. I thought you noble the first night I ever saw your face. Be noble now. Oh, let me go.

He looked at her astounded ; with gloomy brow paced up and down the room.

Oh what a weak fool I am. Heaven forgive me. Speak, Austin, Austin, speak to me. And trembling and wavering she looked up and tried to smile, and her resolution was slipping again.

Why did you never speak before ! Great Heavens ! It is you that have led me on to this ! I never guessed at this.

Now let us draw back, now. You are noble, Austin—

Here. Weep, yes weep, and weep again. Do you forgive me ? said he.

She smiled. Yes.

Ah ! he cried, your answer strikes me like a silly blow,—to dwindle, to be vile, to seek inferior things—and be forgiven.

She was sobbing, and drying her tears alternately.

Ha! what's that! Her voice! He stepped into the room, just too late to notice Lacy's slinking off, and beheld to his amazement Mrs. Neville there. He hesitated, advanced, fell back,—she quivering and white,—and he stood staring at her vacantly.

Her veil had fallen down. She lifted it with a gesture, and looking at him fixedly, scornfully, rent it in two, tore it off, and cast it away. His partner had followed him, all the traces of the tears still in her face. The women's eyes encountered. Mrs. Neville's eyes shot flame. With a look of horror she crouched, made a movement as if trying to hide, stumbled, tripped, then threw her arms back.

Coward!

There was a sting in the word as she darted her wild eyes upon him, and mad as a leopard coursed out of the house.

Mrs. Eddy unused to such alarms came rushing in. What's this? What's this? What's this? O my God!

Mother!

Pauline!

CHAPTER XXIX.

MEANWHILE life amongst the students was wagging on.

Gills lived no longer at Richmond House. He was taking too high a position now for Joseph's guardianship. His dress, style, conversation, all proclaimed as much. He and Clive lived together. That business of the "popping" of the watch had made them friends, and mutual confidence had now cemented it. They occupied the same room, they were always together, drank together, made love to the same barmaids, so they said—in fact such companionships were not unfrequent at this period among these gentle youths.

They were both very genial and were frequent visitors at Richmond House. We

must, however, speak in future of Gills with somewhat more respect. He was no longer the rubicund boyish Freshman now. He dressed more *à la mode*. His cheeks had a more drawn or settled look, and their colour was now an ashy grey streaked peculiarly with red. Do what he could though, he could not repress that laugh of his, and no one thought of reckoning it seriously against him.

Gills did not apply himself to study so much as formerly. Clive knew his work, he declared, and he did at least as much as he. A pretty argument, but Gills was not metaphysical at all. They were too sincerely friendly, and it would have been wrong to make "nasty" invidious distinctions.

With these ingenuous young men, too, at the time this story deals with, it was considered rather "*infra dig.*" to be a "stewpot." This was the designation of a man who devoted much time to the acquisition of learning. The "stewpots" were often men of lax fibre, growing learned by the assuetude of study, some with unhealthy faces, some

with a smug domestic comfort, some with all the excitability of the "spasmodic school" of poets.

Where is Education ?

Where is Culture ?

Where is the Man ?

Gills was none of these. So much in fact were, amongst the set to which Gills approximated now, the "idola of the forum" respected that one could have named two or three young men, ambitious enough to wish to succeed at their examinations, and vain enough to covet this peculiar opinion of their fellows, who actually toiled like galley slaves during part of the twenty-four hours that they might be seen in dissipation for the rest. Fabulous stories, consequently, were afloat about them. How Billy Liversidge for instance got through his examinations without doing any work at all, and how little Nippen won an exhibition with only half as much. This latter was a very clever young man, but sallow, with dark rings under his eyes, and that incredible vanity of desiring to be considered a blackguard. There was

something irreproducible in the way in which little Nippen used to give hint of his terrible excesses. "One must be in the swim, you know—half deprecatingly—One must, you know."

Stories of these brilliancies wrought on the susceptible mind of Gills. Kithdale Brown to be sure once in a weak moment of confidence gave utterance to a theory that had long lain dormant in his mind. Kithdale was a very steady fellow, everybody said, and stripped of its peculiar personal character, Kithdale's theory was somewhat to this effect; that though facility of acquiring knowledge was a very desirable thing, yet in general the preferring patient study to dissipation implied a certain strength of character and superiority of mind. This with Kithdale's peculiar characteristics added had been told by Romanoff with inimitable humour, and had amused Gills' fancy very much.

He disseminated the story with much of the humour left out, for he was not a Romanoff, amongst his own cronies, and at

last it came with nearly all the humour left out to the ears of the not-hearing-much-of-the-outside-world Kithdale himself.

That worthy had a colloquy with Gills. He struck home upon Gills in his own peculiar matter of fact way; and Gills had a remarkably bad quarter of an hour of it. It was generally agreed, however, that his remarks were entirely destitute of humour or indeed of any proper lively appreciation of the *summum bonum* at all.

J. R. M. had come down again as "jolly as a sandboy."

He was always that, or said so. The exchequer was low but the man who had "brought the best brains of all to the shop," the disciple, as he called himself, of Sheridan, was not to be distressed by a trifle like that.

His borrowing capacity had reached its limit too with most of his friends, but Murray was the great patron of Freshmen, and really Freshmen are a not uninteresting set. On all popular occasions J. R. M. was to the fore. A night at the "Cap and Gown"

without J. R. M. — never. But his devices were inexhaustible.

Austin once saw him in his room in most confidential relations with a personage who might not at first have seemed congenial to this quondam lion of the gilded halls,—a tall, brawny, bearded son of toil, to outward look.

The son of toil, however, appeared to be zealous for learning, for he was watching with great interest a chemical experiment of Murray's—his range was not wide but he did this one well—pouring two colourless liquids together and by some peculiar witchery producing a black compound in the tube.

The son of toil looked amazed, and Murray smiled mysteriously.

What on earth is Murray doing with that fellow? said Austin laughing heartily. I had no idea of any zeal in Jimmy for getting science to the masses.

Lacy laughed too. That man's a fireman! he explained.

Well? Austin could not see the explanation.

Well have you noticed that huge butcher

knife looking thing that Murray carries lately slung on to his belt?

Austin certainly had noticed a backwoodsman like weapon but had attributed it, as Murray used to say, "to eccentricities of medical students."

Well can you put two and two together?

Yes, but—

Well then, said Lacy laughing very much, Murray and Romanoff have made the acquaintance of these fellows, and they go round with them to the fires and broach with those weapons the casks of liquor. Jimmy is keeping his *protégé*, with this chemical phenomenon, at once in good humour and appropriate respect.

CHAPTER XXX.

It was evening—Austin and Lacy were pacing along in a meditative mood and here their steps had brought them towards the city. They met, also pacing along in a meditative mood, Romanoff, the elegant Langden, and that steadiest of men, Kithdale Brown.

The moon was shining, the night was clear. Away to the south were the city parks stretching out to the sea. The path along which they walked was a secluded one adjoining the Fitzroy Gardens, and the great city was concealed; there were here no intimations of its fevered life and turmoil. Beyond far over the intervening lowlands

rose the mansions on the terraced slopes. Near by to the west, on a bank, above its garden, half hidden by its trees and trellises of vines, a little villa was pitched. This turned Langden to musing, and made him think of Spain.

Ah, said he, there's a style about those old romances that we don't get nowadays. A Spanish Student; there is romance about the very name. His guitars, his orange groves, his love adventures, his serenades, his sonnets. There's a sort of picturesque about the whole affair.

Langden's fair features grew sentimental in their look.

Yes, continued Lacy, even if you read of them strolling along the open country way, or dipping a crust into the cool spring, or sitting down by the roadside to rest and talk awhile.

Really it seemed a very fine idea and Romanoff may even have sighed—we are not sure of this—but Kithdale Brown certainly did.

But what the devil are you doing out

to-night, Kithdale ? said Lacy, coming down to nearer things.

You're always out. Can't I take one night now and then ? I'm going to have a night about town with Langden here and Romanoff ! and we're just killing time until then.

Oh !

Yes, come along with us, said Romanoff we'll go straight down now.

Lacy turned to Austin. We'll see you later on, said Austin, and he and Lacy continued their walk. Gradually one of Austin's fits of deep melancholy, or at least deep immersion in thought, fell upon him. Boundless desires of every kind had been surging in his mind. Had the instincts and earliest predictions of his boyhood been verified he felt that now he must be trimming his sails for a long voyage. A fever of energy, finding no congenial outlet, was fretting at his heart and eating up his flesh. His spirits had been exuberant in a thousand directions : desires of knowledge, of work to be done, of

effort, active and resolute, and the tasting of superior pleasures. And then there was the searching for those peculiar experiences that, whether for the depth of the realities they open up to us, or for the keenness of their pain, or whether for the stirring the fibres of human sympathy and sounding the deep notes of life and death—most of all, then, the searching for those experiences fraught with the mystery of our living here, that once known leave us not the same for ever afterwards, and recur again and again to our memory.

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It was a little after eleven o'clock when Austin and Lacy met the others again and they entered a room of the vestibule of the Prince of Wales Theatre. The room was a tolerably large one, warm, and fummy and foggy with cigar smoke. In the middle was a bar for serving liquors ; opposite some chairs, and a number of long seats. The walls were hung with mirrors and with pictures, portraits of actresses, prize-fighters,

racehorses, and dogs. Romanoff, Langden, Kithdale Brown, Lacy and Austin, stood near the door for a little while and looked. On the chairs and on the forms, sitting, were a score or two of women, and many others of them were walking about, whose characters were plain at a glance.

This, said Romanoff in an explanatory sort of way, is the Bourse and here is the high water mark of the wit and beauty of Dudley. There were to be observed in colloquy with these women a good number of young men, and it is possible that Romanoff referred to these for his "wit." The "little ladies," as Langden always called them, were, most of them, painted, some elaborately. Several had their hair died golden. Some had painted their lips in a sort of Cupid's bow of vermilion. They had their cheeks powdered and plastered with pastes, Rose d'Amour, Bloom of Ninon, or whatever else may have been then in vogue. They had their eyebrows darkened and eye-

lashes and under eyelids pencilled to make their eyes shine out. There was a battery of eyes, they seemed to flash about everywhere, some with the brightness of fever. Nearly all wore thick fringes. Yet some were attired neatly, modestly, looking like ladies; and one girl in light mourning had the face of a nun. The head dresses of most were showy, extravagant, even bizarre. And some of the gowns were remarkable—silk, satin, velvet, blue, cardinal, yellow, or green, with trimmings, furbelows, flounces, and ornaments at all hazards and cost.

There was no suggestion here of love sonnets and serenades, and orange groves and the fragrance of the balmy evening air. There was the thick atmosphere of tobacco smoke impregnated with the odour of steaming hot drinks, whisky, gin, and brandy and peppermint. Most of the women had good figures. Some were phlegmatic, unconcerned, callous, others haggard beneath the powder and paint. The room was hot, foggy, stifling. A fever, a sort of intoxica-

tion, seemed to be in the air. It was dazzling with all the glare of those eyes. A subtle fume seemed to rise in waves from the floor and poison the blood.

I see a little lady, I want to speak to, said the elegant Langden and departed. Lacy smiled, little lady!

I must have a drink. Austin, can you lend me five shillings? demanded Romanoff.

Austin lent it, and Romanoff departed. He also joined into colloquy with a "little lady."

You'll never see that five shillings again, Austin, said Kithdale Brown.

Austin smiled grimly. There may be other reasons for lending a man five shillings than the hope of seeing it again.

That's the famous Linda Langden's speaking to, said Lacy in explanation, and that's Bessie Williams that Romanoff is talking with. They were the two most famous beauties of their day, but they are both going off a good deal.

Bessie Williams was apparently about 26

years of age, of fine features, eyes flashing as if in defiance. One beheld even then a woman meant by nature for sweetness, tenderness, even self-sacrifice, but with a strange, fearful, unutterably sad look beneath it all.

Austin gazed at her earnestly and the tears surged to his eyes, but with an effort he forced them back.

I saw her when she first came to town, said Lacy. You can see even now in her eye what she was. She tried to poison herself a short time ago—Romanoff wants to make us believe that he was the cause.

He was flattering her and they were both laughing very loud. Many an eye was cast upon Langden and Romanoff and many an eye at the group at the door.

He departed and remained drinking and talking with May Devine. Kithdale Brown, who had long been uneasy at having missed his usual hour of going to bed, went hastily off, and Austin was left alone near the door. He was about to leave, when suddenly the door burst open and in reeled a couple of

jockeys, one of them a celebrated steeple-chase rider, whom Austin had seen hailed by the plaudits of tens of thousands as he proudly brought in his "winning mount" at Wilmington. Why, had not Blashford been complimented by royal lips and been presented with a trophy by fair and distinguished hands?

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The peculiar excitement seized the spectators afresh till it waxed into indescribable disorder. Austin had stood mute, impenetrable, but pale as alabaster.

Pooh, said Lacy who rejoined him, *facilis decensus Averni*. Wait for a year or so and the handsome Bessie Williams will be a scarecrow in the gutters. I've seen it often enough before. Pooh. By Heaven though, that woman was a beauty in her day. Would you like to see anything more?

How deep does it go?

How deep! It has no depths. This is the bottomless pit. Your Milton and your Dante paint Hell, but the æsthetic distinction and grand omnipresence of the place bolster up

the pride of its sovereign. This cauldron is more like the actuality. Romanoff is a good type of devil. Romanoff is capable of any deed that doesn't want pluck. . . . Vice, continued Lacy with the air of a man who had meditated these subjects, vice is essentially vulgar. It poisons the sweet sap of life. Well, sir, you'll find more classes and grades here than you'll find castes in India. I used to wonder how human beings could fall to what I have seen. . . . And Lacy traced out terrible histories he had known. His words made their deep impression upon himself. He seemed inexorable, cruel, as he followed the tale to the end. It is but experience, it is inevitable, he insisted. There is no halting place, none, except by accident, merely. From the first wrong step of a foolish country girl you have this descent,—steep, steep.

They separated. The air seemed to have reeked poison. Austin had escaped into the starlight. He ran, he walked quickly. He jumped into a bus. He thought he was calm,

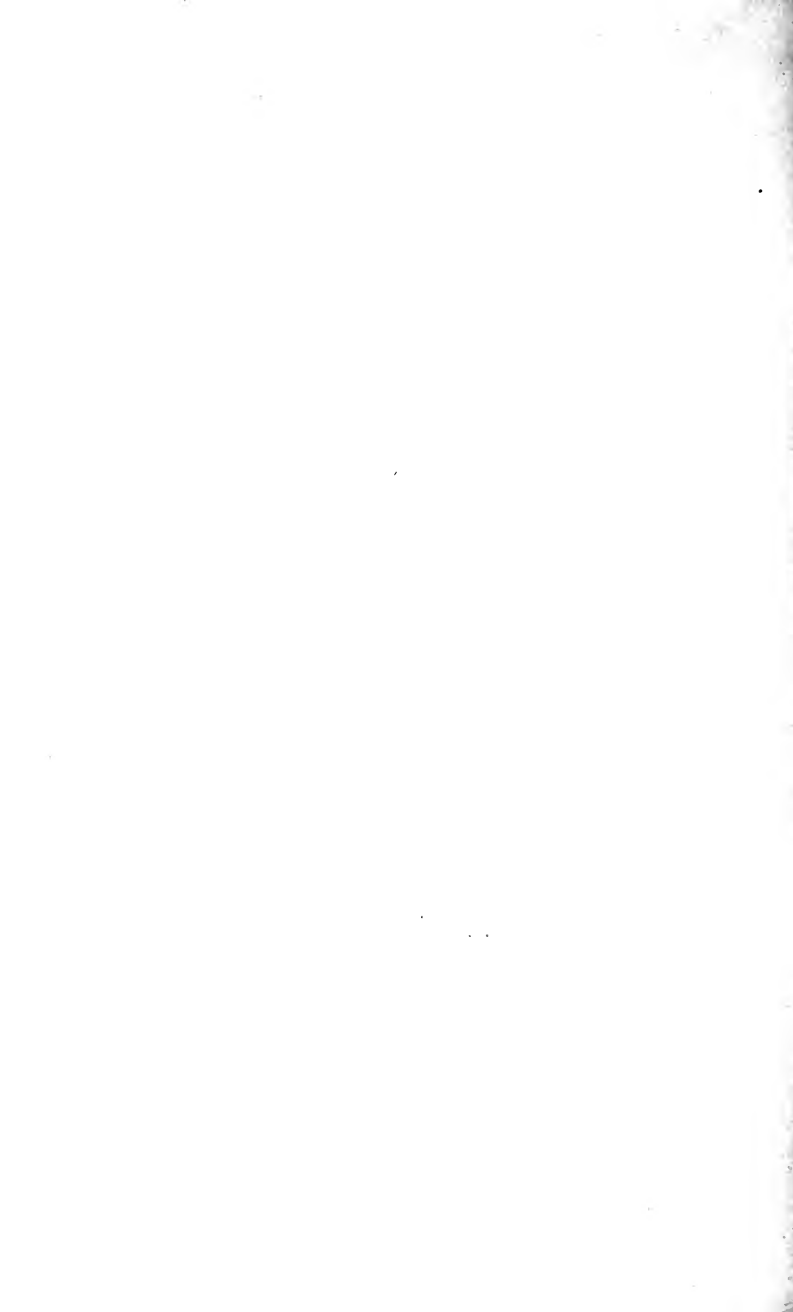
but the passengers were startled by the look he seemed to dart upon each. He got out of the bus and his wandering brought him to the Gardens again.

As though a veil had been rent asunder he saw the fevered workings of an underworld. He had been overwhelmed at first by the depth, the concussion, the tremendous scope of thought that had come surging on his mind.

Not as individual transgression did he now see wickedness, not the errant chance, merely, nor within the bounds of forbiddance, virtue merely. Beneath the spectacle of life he beheld myriad worlds; beneath all, the multitudinous play of force; the growth of feeling, passion, will, the development of the intellect, the spiritual struggle for light and guidance; the earth swept round in mysteries. He saw the dim half-conscious struggling up to progress, health, command, the nobler forms of life, exalted hope; and on the other side, vice, crime, corruption, all whither the enemy leads, ten thousand oafish shapes,

disease, the cancerous fibres of the body social, the images of the brutehead, these throughout all the vistas of horror, this half world, this Hell,—the rout of Sin, the battue of Death.

END OF VOL. I.



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